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By
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NICHOLSON

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COSMOPOLITAN

America's Greatest Magazine

NEXT MONTH



This is a photograph of the most famous woman in America, as she looked at the age of thirteen.

Do you recognize her either from a photograph or from that designation?

Consider the names of well-known women in America and when you open your next month's COSMOPOLITAN, see if you were correct in your guess.

The life story of the Most Famous Woman in America begins in February COSMOPOLITAN.

It is one of the most absorbing autobiographies ever written.

We won't tell you the name now, but we will promise you several months of interest and enjoyment in reading her story. You will find that it is the most engrossing human record of the last decade or so ever put before the public in this form. It is full of humor and of the stories of the greatest and most interesting personalities of our time. You will enjoy every line of it.

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WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST, President C. H. HATHAWAY, Vice-President RAY LONG, Vice-President JOSEPH A. MOORE, Treasurer W. G. LINDGREN, Secretary, 119 W. 40th St., New York

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The Victor Record Catalog is the world's greatest catalog of music



From its 486 pages come to you the most famous artists of this generation. Here are listed their offerings—here you will find cataloged the greatest music the world has produced. In this book are also portraits and biographies and interesting information which help to a better appreciation of all music.

Do you know, for instance, the story of La Boheme, and which two composers wrote operas of that name?

Did you know that James Whitcomb Riley himself recited some of his poems for Victor Records?

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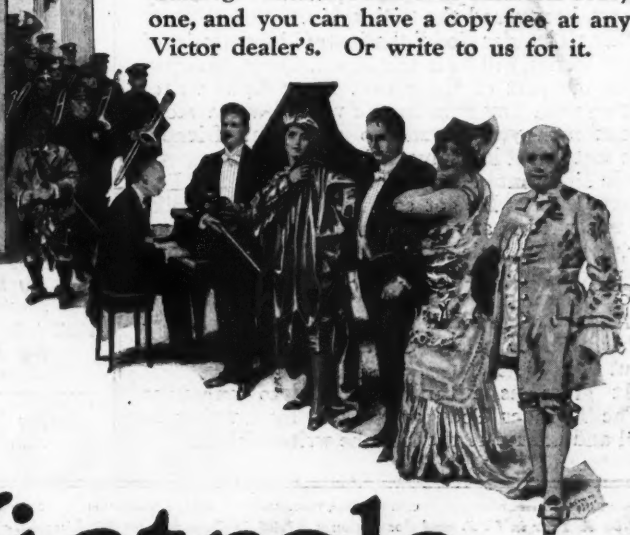
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COSMOPOLITAN

America's Greatest Magazine

NEXT MONTH



Peter B. Kyne

This man's man who wrote "The Pride of Palomar," "The Go Getter," "Kindred of the Dust," the "Cappy Ricks" stories and many others, has turned the trick again.

"The Thunder God," the first of his new series of short stories, will be in the March COSMOPOLITAN. It is the sort of thing that Peter Kyne writes better than any man in the world—a sea story about men you'd want to call your friends, the sort you'll know by their first names.

He didn't intend to make a series of them. But that's Kyne. He got so interested in the folks he was writing about, and made such real, regular, lovable people of them, that he telegraphed to us that he couldn't help but keep on writing about them.

And we telegraphed back that he'd tapped another vein of gold—"Go ahead and God bless you!"

It gives us a thrill of pride to announce "The Thunder God" and others by a writer as real and likable as the folks he writes about.

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"My Victor Records shall be my biography"

That was Caruso's characteristic remark when he was once approached regarding his biography.

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COSMOPOLITAN

America's Greatest Magazine

NEXT MONTH



Stephen Vincent Benét

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT has written a story. He has written other stories—stories that have marked him as perhaps the most promising of America's new generation of clear-thinking writers.

But this time he has written a *story*.

And COSMOPOLITAN is publishing it—with enthusiasm—in the next, the April number.

The name of the story is "Elementals." It is a story about a thing that could happen to you, to anybody; a simple test of your character that you could begin putting yourself through this very evening—if you thought you could stand it. But could you? You will read the story—and some one you love will read it—and it will make you both think. But you won't make the test. You won't dare.

It is mighty significant for American literature that a story with all the reserve and force and power of "Elementals" could be written by a man twenty-three years old. But Stephen Vincent Benét (you pronounce it Ben-nay) comes from a line of thinkers and writers.

And best of all, Benét is an American, born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He has already written one novel, "The Beginning of Wisdom," which has made the reading public realize that here is a man who has something to say, and who says it with directness and charm.

Watch for his story in April COSMOPOLITAN.

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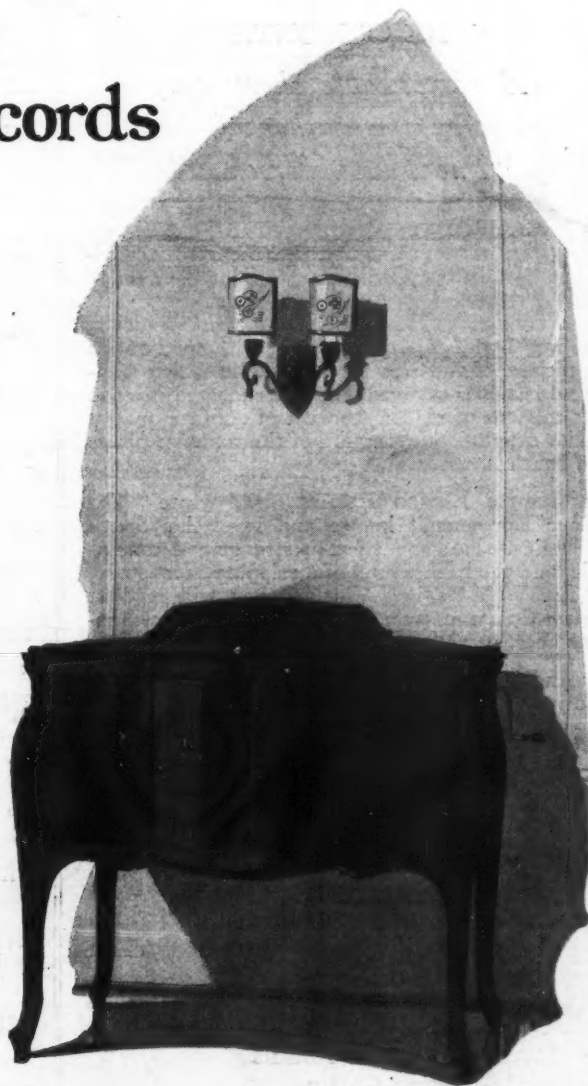
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America's Greatest Magazine

NEXT MONTH

*A remarkable short story
by the author of
"The Four Horsemen"*

EVERYBODY remembers "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," the most talked-about book the Great War produced—a book that has been translated into almost every civilized tongue. "The Four Horsemen" achieved its world-wide reputation because it stood out as a picture of the greatest struggle in which mankind has ever engaged. But it endeared itself to its millions of readers because of another quality—its delightful delineation of the romance of life in South America.

Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, who wrote "The Four Horsemen," knows and loves his South America. He has made this strange and romantic land the background of a gripping short story, "The Widow's Loan," which you will read in May COSMOPOLITAN. It is a story you will remember.

And in May COSMOPOLITAN you will find not only Ibáñez but also—

Irvin S. Cobb
P. G. Wodehouse
George Ade
Meredith Nicholson
Edgar A. Guest
Gouverneur Morris
Lillian Russell
Edwin Balmer
Royal Brown
Ida M. Evans
Robert Hichens
Frank R. Adams
Dana Gatlin
Montague Glass

Watch for May COSMOPOLITAN. You will find it worth while to stop in at your news dealer's and reserve your copy now.

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America's Greatest Magazine

NEXT MONTH



Arthur Stringer

ARTHUR STRINGER says of himself that he's a farmer by trade, and a writer by vocation. This may be true, but Arthur Stringer stands today as one of the most gifted writers alive.

Witness his novels, known throughout the English-speaking world—*The Prairie Wife*, *The Gun-Runner*, *The Wire Tappers*, and other books.

His first COSMOPOLITAN short story—*The Well*—appears next month in the June number. It is one of the most gripping, most powerful human stories we ever published.

And on top of that—a great piece of news for every reader of COSMOPOLITAN—there will be a Peter B. Kyne story in the June issue. It is a sequel to *The Thunder God*. What more need be said?

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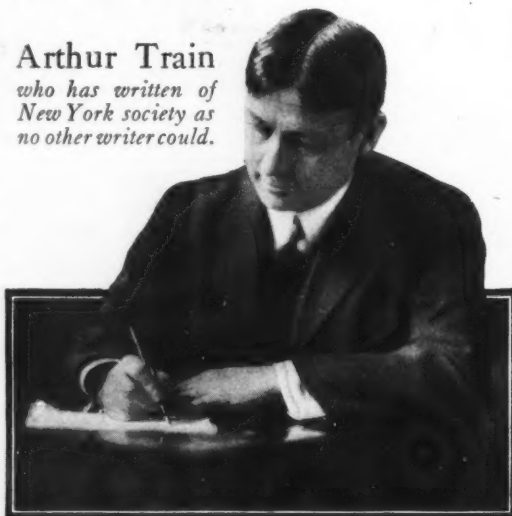
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NEXT MONTH

Arthur Train

who has written of New York society as no other writer could.



BY profession Arthur Train is a lawyer—and a very successful one, too. By inclination he is a writer. By birth he is of New York's old aristocracy, as is his wife, Ethel Train, also a well known writer.

Mr. Train began work two years ago on a novel dealing with a subject many writers have tackled but none has been able really to cover. For a year and a half he collected material. Then he quit the law for six months and gave every moment of his time and every spark of his energy to writing.

He has done for America what Galsworthy has done for England. In *His Children's Children* he has given us a picture of New York social life such as has never even been approached before. He has written of the inside, from the inside; and he has told with great dramatic power just what is going on these days in what used to be known as "the 400."

His Children's Children
begins in
July COSMOPOLITAN

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST, President C. H. HATHAWAY, Vice-President RAY LONG, Vice-President JOSEPH A. MOORE, Treasurer W. G. LANGDON, Secretary, 119 W. 40th St., New York
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The Harrison Fisher cover of this issue without lettering mailed on receipt of 25 cents

Are You Headed Up—

asks

GEORGE ADE



THE boy you knew back in grammar school—the one locally groomed for the U. S. Senate—what became of him? Driving a taxi right back there in the old home town.

And silent Edgar, who was not good enough for the ball team? Merely president of the J. P. and H. We live in a land of opportunity—and blow-ups.

Did any other part of the globe, at any time, ever witness such meteoric flashes across the open firmament or such cataclysmal collapses into the soft mud?

In older regions, where usages have petrified, each individual may find himself wedged and locked into a numbered social stratum and selected to remain there.

Over here, the facilities for going up in balloons and falling down elevator shafts are glorious and unexcelled.

The well-known team of Presto and Change is doing legerdemain in every center of population. Now you see them and now you don't see them!

If you want to check up on the sensational upsets and sky-rocket ascensions, do not figure a man merely from one birthday to another. Invoice him at twenty and, after that, leave him alone until he is fifty. Then add him up. Compare the ratings.

Youth is heedless and cannot be warned because it commands no perspective of the years. It never has seen towering notables peter away to wilted remnants while plodding yokels grew into giants and sat on their thrones as if they had been born under purple hangings.

It isn't the start that counts, here in the land of whirligigs. It's the finish.

Trunk lines heading for the most important destinations go through a lot of scrubby way-stations.

The traveler picked up by an avalanche and carried to nameless depths of oblivion passes a lot of superior scenery on the way down.

The point being that our immediate background this afternoon doesn't matter so much, but it is most important to know which way our little solitaire special is headed.

A most revealing occupation is to get out the family album and review the biographies of those dudes and débutantes who were in bud about the time of the World's Fair in Chicago.

Discover, if you can, why Fate seems to work with a dice-box instead of a T-square.

Try to explain why the most theatrical matrimonial alliances finish on the rocks, wrecked to a fare-ye-well.

Regard the painful smash-ups which waited for young people who inherited money and were supposed to be "lucky."

Learn by deduction that money doesn't care whom it belongs to.

Good repute can be switched on and off, like an electric current.

Why call it a melting-pot? It's a churn.



The first of a series of Songs of the Cities

CHICAGO

By Edgar A. Guest

Decoration by Dean Cornwell

*Chicago is a man's town,
A man's town, through and through;
Men plod its highways up and down
A strong man's work to do,
The funnels men have builded
Draw fires men keep alive,
Yet bright the domes are gilded
Which crown this busy hive.
And gay the laughter ringing,
And wondrous fair the hum
Of all the kettles singing
When home the toilers come.*

This is Chicago, as I see it—
Haunt of a dream and the will to be it.
Temple of courage and worth and pride,
Sending her children, far and wide,
Toiling by day that the world may know
Peace in the evening's afterglow.
Steam and hammer,
Smoke and clamor,
Bolt and rivet and clang of steel.
But each day making the dream come real.

This is Chicago as I've found it,
Rich with life as you walk around it;
Big in all it has reared to see,
But bigger yet in its dreams to be.
Fond of money, but fonder far
Of the restful parks where its children are.
Proud of skill,
But prouder still
Of a child's glad face and a mother's smile
And the simple touch of the things worth while.

This is Chicago as I know it,
Great as the greatest and glad to show it.
Boastful? Yes, if it's wrong to boast
Of handiwork at its uppermost.
Swift and stern is the law it wields,
Harvests come from the best-tilled fields,
And day is made
For a man's grim trade,
And only he shall be free at night
For the joys of home who has earned the right.

This is Chicago, as I've met it,
Seeker of much and bound to get it.
What was a dream but a year away
Is a thing achieved by its men today.
And this the pledge of its youth: "Somehow
We shall do tomorrow the dream of Now."
Yet under it all,
The great and small,
Back of the vision and in the plan
Is the will to fashion a greater man.

This is Chicago as I've learned it,
A rich man able to say: "I've earned it.

Money I have, but each dollar came
From an honest day by the furnace flame.
Temples of beauty are mine to show,
Gay the walks where my children go,
But these are mine
By a right divine.
I have braved the sun and scorned the shade,
By the sweat of my brow were my fortunes made."

This is Chicago, as I hold it,
A mirror reflecting the men who mold it.
Back of the spire and back of the dome
And back of the furnace, the path to home.
There as in your home town and mine
You find the walls with the climbing vine,
The girls and boys
And the self-same joys
Marking the days and the weeks and years,
And the self-same sorrows and bitter tears.

This is Chicago, as I've seen it,
Rich, with purity streaked between it,
Gaudy and gay in the lights that glare
But gentle and mild on the side streets, where
The mothers smile and the children play
And the toilers rest at the close of day.
Greater far
Than its glories are,
Must be that chorus to drowsy eyes
From millions and millions of lullabies.







PHOTOGRAPH BY CARL L. STERN

MEREDITH NICHOLSON, author of "Broken Barriers."

ARE American girls of today different from the girls of our parents' youth? If they are, what changed them? And will they be better for the change—or worse? If they are upsetting old standards and traditions, will they make better ones?

Mr. Nicholson has molded this striking subject into one of the most vital novels we have ever published. No one could describe young America better than this distinguished American gentleman, novelist and essayist—especially as he has written about his home town of Indianapolis and of the sort of people who live in every part of America. We believe you will find that here he has done the most brilliant work of his career.

"I never thought my girls would have to battle for their bread," said Mrs. Durland.



Beginning MEREDITH NICHOLSON'S

Startling Novel of an

American Girl of Today

BROKEN BARRIERS

Illustrations by Pruett Carter

AS the train sped through the night Grace Durland decided that after all it didn't matter so much!

She had parted tearfully from the girls at the sorority house and it had been a wrench to say good by to her friends among the faculty; but now that it was all over she was surprised and a little mystified that she had so quickly recovered from her disappointment. Bitterness had welled in her heart at the first reading of her mother's letter calling her home. Her brother Roy, always the favored one, was to remain at the university to finish the law course, for which he had shown neither aptitude nor zeal, and this hurt a little. And they might have warned her of the impending crisis in the family fortunes before she left home to begin the fall term, only a month earlier.

But her resentment had passed. The spirit of adventure beat in her breast with strong insistent wing. With the fatalism of imaginative youth she was already assuring herself that some force beyond her control had caught her up and was bearing her on irresistibly.

She lay back at ease in her seat in the day coach, grateful that there were no acquaintances on the train to interrupt her reveries. She was twenty-one, tall, slightly above medium height and bore every mark of sound health and wholesome living—a fair representative of the self-reliant American girls visible on the campus of all mid-Western colleges. The excitement of her hasty packing and leave taking had left a glow in her olive cheeks. Her hair, where it showed under her sport hat, was a lustrous black; her eyes were brown, though in shadow they changed to jade—variable, interesting eyes they were, that arrested attention by their quick play of emotion. They expressed her alert intelligence, her frank curiosity, her sympathetic and responsive nature.

When the train reached Indianapolis she left her trunk check

with the baggage agent and boarded a street car. At Wasnington Street, she transferred to the trolley line that ran down New York Street, where the Durland house faced Military Park. New York Street between the old canal and the western end of the park had once been a fashionable quarter of the town, and the old houses still stood, though their glory of the Civil War time and the years immediately succeeding had passed. The Durland house was a big square brick in a yard that rose a little above the street. The native forest trees in the yards all along the block added to the impression of age imparted by the houses themselves. Under the branches of the big walnut in the Durland front yard the neighborhood children of Grace's generation had gathered to play. The tree was identified with her earliest recollections; it had long symbolized the stability of the home itself. Her ring brought her mother to the door, clutching a newspaper.

"Why, Grace! I had no idea——"

She caught the girl in her arms, then held her away, looked into her eyes and kissed her.

"I'm so sorry, dear! I know what it means to you. It's a terrible disappointment to all of us."

"Oh, I understand everything, mother!"

"But I didn't expect you so soon. I don't see how you managed it. I thought you'd probably wait till Saturday."

"Oh, I couldn't have done that, mother."

"How's Roy? He didn't write at all last week."

"He's well and sent his love to everybody. He promises to work harder than ever now."

"I'm sure he will. I know he was sorry to see you leave; he'd know what a wrench it would be for you."

They had been talking in the hall, with Grace's suitcase and



Irene and Kemp were indifferent to the other members of the party. Grace was fingering the stem of

tennis racket lying on the threshold where she had dropped them. She pushed them out of the way at the foot of the old-fashioned stair that rose steeply just inside the door.

"Don't bother about them now. Your father's in the sitting room, and Ethel's up in the spare room sewing."

She lifted her head and called her elder daughter's name and from some remote place Ethel answered. Mrs. Durland was as dark as Grace, but cast in a bigger mold, and while there were points of resemblance in their faces there was a masculine vigor in the mother that the girl lacked. Mrs. Durland's iron-gray hair was brushed back smoothly from her low broad forehead. She wore an authoritative air, suggesting at once managerial capacity; a woman, one would have said, strongly independent in her thinking; self-assertive but of kind and generous impulses.

Grace was already in the sitting room, where she tiptoed up behind her father, who was absorbed in a book that he read as it lay on the table before him. His bent shoulders suggested that this was his favorite manner of managing a book. Grace passed her hands over his thick shock of disordered hair and patted his cheek; then bent and laid her face against his.

"Well, here I am, daddy!"

"Not home, Grace!" he exclaimed bewilderedly. "Nobody told me you were coming."

"Nobody knew I was coming tonight."

"Well, well! I didn't know there was a train at this hour. Nice to see you, Grace."

He turned with an absent air to the open volume, as though the conversation was at an end, then moved his chair farther away from the table. Mrs. Durland had come in, followed quickly by Ethel, who brought down a workbasket and a blouse she had been at work on when interrupted by the announcement of her sister's arrival.

Ethel was twenty-seven, fair and not so tall as Grace. Her mother said that she was a Durland, specifically like one of her husband's sisters in Ohio. Mrs. Durland was a Morley and the Morleys were a different stock, with the Kentucky background so precious in the eyes of many Indians. Mrs. Durland's father had been a lawyer of small attainments in a southern Indiana county, but it was her grandfather, who had sat in the Constitutional Convention of 1851 and later been speaker of the Indiana house of representatives, that her pride concentrated. She had married Stephen Durland at Rangerton, where as a young man he had begun with Isaac Cummings the manufacture of a few small specialties, moving within the year to Indianapolis with a number of Durland's inventions as the basis of their fortune.

"Things have changed some since you left, Grace. I'm sorry you had to quit," Durland was saying, while Ethel, having greeted her sister, sat down by the smoldering coal fire and resumed her sewing.

"It's all right, father," said Grace, who had taken off her hat and coat. "I came back as soon as I got the news, so you and



the cocktail glass. "You really don't want that," Trenton said. "If you're not used to it let it alone."

mother would know it's all right with me. We're all going to be cheerful, no matter what happens."

"Of course we've all got to do that," murmured Ethel without looking up.

"It's humiliating to be brought up short this way," said Durland. "It's all my fault; I got nobody to blame but myself, Grace. I went on thinking everything was all right. I ought to have learned the ways of business. Cummings always seemed willing for me to work as I did for twenty years, trying to improve on my old patents and develop new ideas. But ideas don't come as fast as they used to. I guess he thought he'd got everything I was ever likely to have to offer."

"It was certainly unkind, after all the years you'd been together. But you're not done; you're going to strike something bigger than any of the old things."

"That's what I've been telling father," said Ethel. "A man who's spent years inventing things is likely to find something big any time. Of course without the shop father can't work as well, but he's going to have a shop of his own."

"Oh, that's fine, father!" exclaimed Grace. "Where's the shop going to be?"

"It's not much of a place," Durland answered in the apologetic tone that was habitual with him. "I've taken a room in the Billings Power Building and am going to run a pattern and model shop. That's what I'll call it; I hope to get enough work right away to pay the rent."

"I'm sure you will. Everybody who knows anything about the machinery business knows you're the inventor of the best of the Cummings-Durland products."

"They've changed the name of the company now," Ethel remarked. "They've taken father's name out."

"Changed the name in reorganizing the company," Durland explained in his colorless tone. "I had some loans the bank wouldn't carry any longer; stock I held had to be sold and Cummings bought it."

"A man who will do a thing like that will be punished for it; he won't prosper," said Ethel in a curious strained voice.

Durland frowned as he glanced at his elder daughter. Evidently the remark was distasteful to him; he found no consolation in the prediction that unseen powers would punish Cummings for his perfidy.

"I'd probably have done the same thing if I'd been in his place. Everything he turned down—new ideas, I mean—proved to be no good when I put my own money into 'em on the side. You got to be fair about it."

It was clear that he set great store by the new shop. The fact that he had a place to work kept his self-respect alive; with a place in which to continue his experiments he was not utterly condemned to the scrap heap. He lifted his head and his jaws tightened. Grace noted with pity these manifestations of a resurgence of his courage. His laborious life, his few interests outside the shop, or more accurately his own private laboratory in a

corner of it, his evenings at home spent over scientific books and periodicals, his mild assent to everything his wife proposed with reference to family affairs all had their pathos. She had always felt that he had a fondness for her that was not shared by Roy and Ethel. Grace imagined that it was a disappointment to her father that Roy hadn't a mechanical bent. In his gentle unassertive fashion, Durland had tried to curb the lad's proneness to seek amusement, to skimp his lessons—this in Roy's high school days; but Mrs. Durland had always been quick to defend Roy; in her eyes he could do no wrong.

Ethel and her father were almost equally out of sympathy. Ethel was intensely religious, zealous in attendance upon a downtown church, a teacher in its Sunday school and active in its young people's society. While Mrs. Durland attended the same church she was not particularly religious; she believed there was good in all churches; but she was proud of Ethel's prominence in a church whose membership was recruited largely from the prosperous. Ethel was on important committees and she was now and then a delegate to conventions; the pastor called upon her frequently and she had been asked to dinner at the houses of wealthy members of the congregation, though usually some church business inspired the invitation. In a day when the frivolity of the new generation was a subject for general lamentation, Ethel could be pointed to as a pattern of sobriety and rectitude. Durland had ceased going to church shortly after his marriage and his wife had accounted to his children for his apostasy on the ground of his scientific leanings. He never discussed religion; indeed, he never debated any question with his family.

Mrs. Durland came bustling in carrying an apron she was hem-stitching and the talk at once became more animated.

"The Cummings are in their new house on Washington Boulevard, Grace. They've left the house on Meridian they bought when they moved away from here. We're the only people on this block who were here when your father bought the house."

Ethel and her mother engaged in a long discussion of the Cummings family, not neglecting to abuse the senior Cummings for his high-handed conduct in dropping Durland from the business.

"Won't you let me do that stitching for you?" asked Grace bending toward her mother.

"No; you're tired, dear. Better just sit and talk. Ethel, tell Grace about your work."

"Well, I've just begun and I don't know much about it myself. I'm in the Gregg & Burley company; they're one of the biggest insurance agencies in town. Mr. Burley's been ever so nice to me. His little girl's in my Sunday school class. I'm handling the telephone calls and waiting on the counter now. I started at eighteen a week but Mr. Burley says they'll raise me just as soon as I'm worth more."

"I never thought my girls would have to battle for their bread," said Mrs. Durland. "I've always clung to the idea that girls should stay with their mothers till they married. But of course thousands of splendid girls are at work in every kind of business. It's hard for me to get used to it."

"I don't see any reason why women shouldn't work at anything they please," said Grace.

"Just the same it's hard for me to get used to it," Mrs. Durland replied. "In Rangerton there were girls who clerked in stores, and of course women teachers; but I remember it seemed queer when my father employed a stenographer in his office."

"I've got an idea I could sell things," Grace remarked. "I read an article in a magazine about the psychology of salesmanship, and I have a strong hunch that that would be a good field for me. The big stores must be taking on more help at this season. I'm going to see what the chances are."

"You're not in earnest, Grace!" cried Mrs. Durland, swinging round quickly. "It would be a lot better, considering your education, for you to teach or go into an office as Ethel's doing. It's so much more respectable. It would break my heart to see you behind a counter!"

Durland shifted uncomfortably in his chair as the matter was discussed. For years he had lived his own life, his thoughts centered constantly upon mechanical projects. He was now confronted by the fact that as the result of his intense preoccupation with tools, metals and wood and his inattention and incapacity in business he was hardly a factor in family affairs. He listened almost as though he were a stranger in a strange house, his guilt heavy upon him. He started when Grace addressed him directly.

"Well, daddy, don't you think I'm right about trying my arts of persuasion as a saleslady? I've always loved that word! I think it would be fascinating!"

"You make it sound interesting," said Durland cautiously

after a timid glance at his wife. "It hurts me to think you girls have got to go to work. But as long as it can't be helped I want you to do the best you can for yourselves. You ought to be sure you get into something where you got a chance to climb up."

"Yes, daddy," said Grace kindly. "I want to make my time count. If I'm going to be a business woman I mean to play the part for all I'm worth."

"I simply couldn't be reconciled to having you in a store," said Mrs. Durland. "An office would be much more dignified."

"I guess Grace can take care of herself all right," said Durland with a self-assertion he rarely manifested.

"Of course!" replied Mrs. Durland quickly. "We can trust our girls anywhere. I was only thinking of the annoyances. I've seen girls humiliated in some of the stores by floor-walkers—right before customers, and it always makes me boil."

"Well, I'm not afraid," said Grace. "School teachers have a hard time too, with principals and supervisors checking them up all the time. Now that I'm going out into the world I'm not going to ask any special favors because I'm a woman. The day for that's all passed."

"And it's a pity it's so!" declared Mrs. Durland.

"Oh, I'm not so sure of that," Grace retorted. "Times change and we've got to move with the procession. I'm strong for taking the world as I find it."

She glanced laughingly at her father who smiled at her approvingly. He was enormously relieved that Grace was meeting the family misfortunes so bravely. His courage was strengthened by her very presence in the house. Prematurely aged as he was he rejoiced in her youth, her vitality, her good humor and high spirits. He followed her with admiring eyes as she moved about the room. She bent for a moment over the book he had been reading, asked him about it, and drew him out as to its nature and merits. He was as happy as a boy when some grown-up manifests an intelligent interest in his toys.

"I hope you won't be in too much of a hurry about going to work, Grace," said Mrs. Durland. "It's a serious matter for you and all of us. Perhaps Ethel could make some suggestions. Some of her church friends might be able to help you."

"I shall be glad to do anything I can," Ethel murmured without looking up from her sewing.

"Oh, thanks; I'll certainly call on you if I see any place where you can help. I've been thinking about it ever since I got mother's letter, and I think I'll call up Irene Kirby right now and make an appointment to see her tomorrow. She's been in Shipley's ever since she left high school."

"Oh, please don't do that!" protested Mrs. Durland. "I never liked that girl. Her people are very ordinary and I never liked your intimacy with her when you went to school together."

"Why, mother, Irene's one of the finest girls I ever knew! She was a good student in high school and certainly behaved herself. She can tell me all about Shipley's and the chances of getting on there."

"I don't like it at all," replied Mrs. Durland tremulously. "It's bad enough having my daughters going downtown to work and I'd hate having you ask favors of a girl like Irene Kirby. I don't see why you can't wait a little and let Ethel help you find something more suited to your bringing-up."

"Well, it won't do any harm to see Irene and talk to her."

They heard her voice at the telephone in the hall and caught scraps of her animated talk with Irene.

"Grace is so headstrong," Mrs. Durland sighed. "And you never can tell how anything's going to strike her. She's the last girl in the world you'd think would want to work in a department store. She isn't that type at all. Stephen, I wish you'd put your foot down. With a little patience she can find something much more suitable."

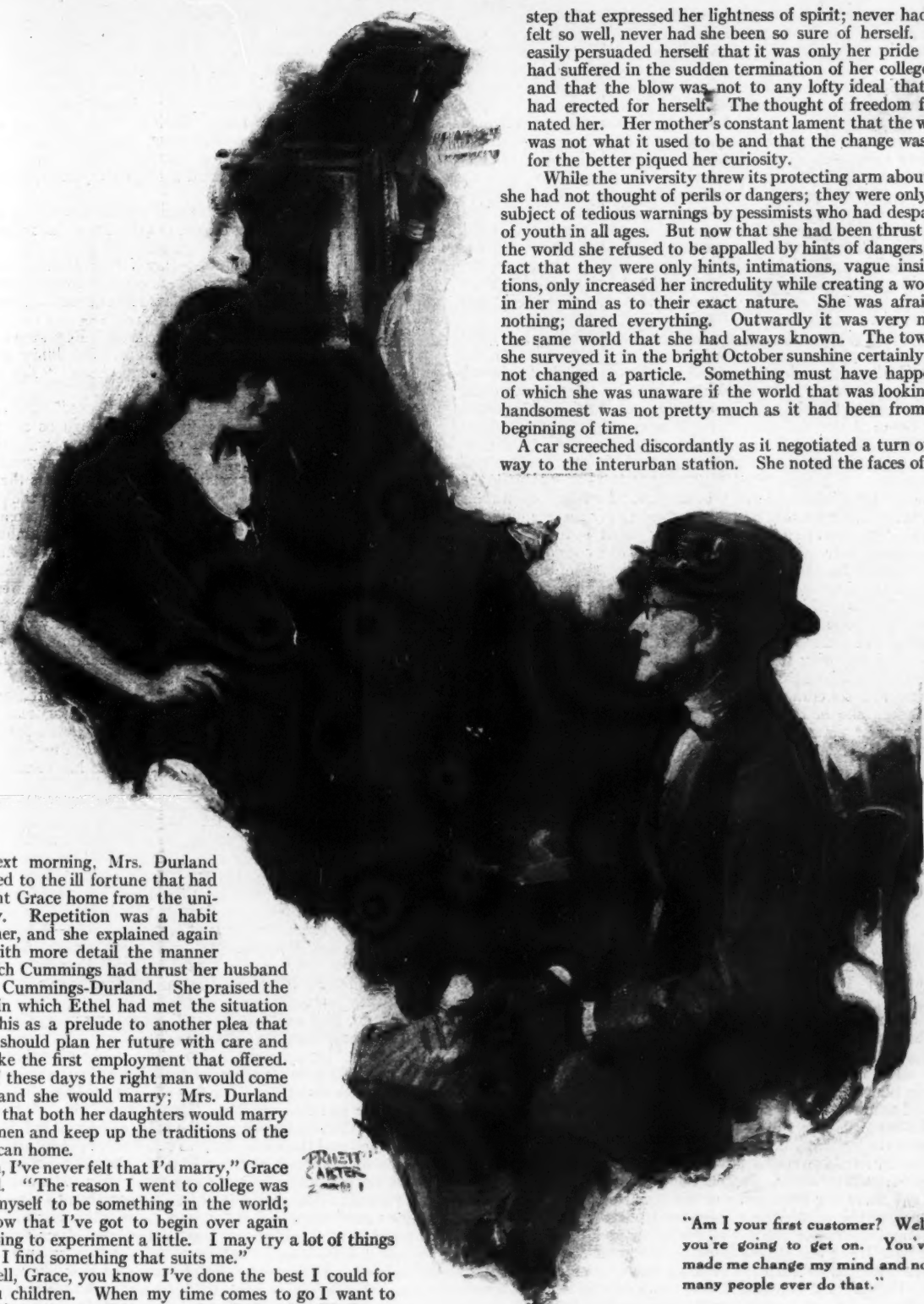
Durland looked at his wife blankly, trying to recall any other instance where he had been asked to put his foot down. If he had been a man of mirth he might have laughed.

"Grace ain't going to do anything foolish; you can trust Grace," he said.

"What did Irene say?" asked Ethel when Grace came back from the telephone.

"Oh, I'm going to have lunch with her tomorrow at the store and she'll tell me everything," Grace answered carelessly. "Well, daddy, it's about time for the regular evening apple," she said as a clock struck eleven and Durland looked at his watch. There was a plate of apples on the table with a knife beside it, and Durland, pleased that she remembered his habit of eating an apple before going to bed, took one she chose for him and peeled it with care, tossing the peeling into the grate.

As Grace and her mother washed the dishes and made the beds



step that expressed her lightness of spirit; never had she felt so well, never had she been so sure of herself. She easily persuaded herself that it was only her pride that had suffered in the sudden termination of her college life and that the blow was not to any lofty ideal that she had erected for herself. The thought of freedom fascinated her. Her mother's constant lament that the world was not what it used to be and that the change was not for the better piqued her curiosity.

While the university threw its protecting arm about her she had not thought of perils or dangers; they were only the subject of tedious warnings by pessimists who had despaired of youth in all ages. But now that she had been thrust into the world she refused to be appalled by hints of dangers; the fact that they were only hints, intimations, vague insinuations, only increased her incredulity while creating a wonder in her mind as to their exact nature. She was afraid of nothing; dared everything. Outwardly it was very much the same world that she had always known. The town as she surveyed it in the bright October sunshine certainly had not changed a particle. Something must have happened of which she was unaware if the world that was looking its handsomest was not pretty much as it had been from the beginning of time.

A car screeched discordantly as it negotiated a turn on its way to the interurban station. She noted the faces of the

the next morning, Mrs. Durland recurred to the ill fortune that had brought Grace home from the university. Repetition was a habit with her, and she explained again and with more detail the manner in which Cummings had thrust her husband out of Cummings-Durland. She praised the spirit in which Ethel had met the situation—all this as a prelude to another plea that Grace should plan her future with care and not take the first employment that offered. One of these days the right man would come along and she would marry; Mrs. Durland hoped that both her daughters would marry good men and keep up the traditions of the American home.

"Oh, I've never felt that I'd marry," Grace replied. "The reason I went to college was to fit myself to be something in the world; and now that I've got to begin over again I'm going to experiment a little. I may try a lot of things before I find something that suits me."

"Well, Grace, you know I've done the best I could for all you children. When my time comes to go I want to know that you are all happy and well placed in life."

"Please, mother," laughed Grace, "don't talk about leaving! I want you to be sure I'm not bitter about anything. You and father have always been splendid to us children and I'm sure we appreciate it."

II

It was a clear crisp day and Grace decided to walk the short distance to the business district. She left the house with a buoyant

"Am I your first customer? Well, you're going to get on. You've made me change my mind and not many people ever do that."

passengers at the windows—country folk and small town people—and felt her comradeship with them. She had once heard the president of the university say that the state was like a big neighborhood of cheerful, industrious aspiring people and the thought pleased her.

In so far as she paid any attention to the talk about changes that she had heard at home and at the university, Grace believed they were all for good; that it was well to be done with hypocrisy,

cant, prudishness; that a frank recognition of evil rather than an attempt to cloak it marked a distinct advance. When she was about nine her mother had rebuked her severely for using the word leg; a leg was a limb and not vulgarly to be referred to as a leg.

Grace Durland was no more responsible for the changes going on about her than her parents had been for the changes of their day. They had seen the passing of the hoop skirt and red flannel underwear and the abandonment of the asafetida bag as a charm against infection and other follies innumerable. Boys and girls had once stolen down the backstairs or brazenly lied to gain an evening of freedom; now the only difference was that they demanded—and received—a key to the front door! Civilization will hardly be shaken to pieces over the question whether a girl can refuse to wear a corset and still be respectable, or roll her stockings without danger of perdition. The new generation isn't responsible for changes that began the day after creation and started all over again right after the flood and will continue to go right on to the end of all things.

The last of a number of errands she had undertaken for her mother brought her to Shipley's, a little before twelve. As she walked the aisles of the main floor she observed the young women who waited on her with a particular attention inspired by the feeling that she too might soon be standing behind a counter. Some of the clerks at Shipley's were women well advanced in middle life whom she remembered from her earliest visits to the establishment. These veterans contributed to the Shipley's reputation for solidity and permanence. They enjoyed the friendly acquaintance of many customers, who relied upon their counsel in their purchases. There were many more employees of this type in Shipley's than in any other establishment in town; they were an asset, a testimony to the consideration the firm showed its employees, the high character of the owners. Grace's imagination played upon her own future: what if she should find herself in ten or twenty years behind a counter, ambition and hope dead in her and nothing ahead but the daily exhibition of commodities and the making out of sale slips. But this cloud was only the tiniest speck on her horizon. She had already set a limit upon the time she would spend in such a place if her services were accepted; it was the experience she wanted and when she had exhausted the possibilities of Shipley's or some similar place she meant to carry her pitcher of curiosity to other fountains.

III

WHILE waiting for Irene outside the lunch room she found amusement in watching the shoppers, studying them, determining their financial and social status. Some one had told her that she was endowed with a special gift for appraising character; and she had the conceit of her inexperience as a student of the human kind. Her speculations as to the passers-by were interrupted by the arrival of Irene.

"It's perfectly wonderful to see you again! I was that delighted to hear your voice over the wire last night. You're looking marvelous! I always adored your gypsy effect! Come along—there's a particular table in a far corner they keep for me and we can talk for just one hour."

She had put on her coat and hat to disguise the fact, she explained, that she was merely a hand who worked for wages. She was a tall blonde, with a wealth of honey-colored hair, and China blue eyes. In the high school she had been one of Grace's special admirations and her old admiration quickened today as she noted the girl's ease, the somewhat scornful air with which she inspected the lunch card. Her father was a locomotive engineer and the family lived in a comfortable house on a pleasant street not far from the railway shops. Irene had brothers and sisters but they did not share her good looks or her social qualities. Irene met the rest of the world with a lofty condescension which fell short of being insufferable only by reason of her good humor. Selfishness with Irene was almost a virtue, it manifested itself so candidly. She had no intention of being bored, or of putting herself out. Ugliness and clumsiness were repugnant to her. Disagreeable things did not trouble her because she had schooled herself not to see them. She was clever, adroit, resourceful, and wise with the astonishing worldly-wisdom that is the heritage of the children of the twentieth century. In school she had been a fair scholar; the grand manner and a ready wit had assisted her even there. When puzzled that Irene was able to wear much better clothes than most of her girl companions in the high school, Grace had been awed to find that Irene made her own frocks and could retouch last year's hat with a genius that made it appear to have been lifted from the window of a smart milliner.

"You still have the same queenly look, Irene," Grace remarked.

"Queenly nothing! You're nearly as tall as I am and I haven't anything like your hauteur. I suppose the Lord made me tall and gave me square shoulders just to hang clothes on for women with money to look at. I wish I had your black head; being a blonde is an awful handicap if you're doomed to work for a living. And a complexion like mine, which is called good by experts, is a nuisance. I refuse an offer about once a month to go on the road selling and demonstrating cosmetics. Hideous!"

"I supposed you'd be married before this; you must have had lots of chances."

"Chances but not opportunities," replied Irene with a shrug. "Don't tell me you've quit college to get married; not a professor, I hope!"

"I quit because we're broke—my father couldn't afford to keep me in college any longer. Some one had to drop out and as Roy has only a year more in the law school it seemed better for him to keep on."

"Roy?" Irene repeated the name as though Roy were a negligible figure in the affairs of the Durlands. "She knew Roy well enough; he simply didn't lie in her line of vision. 'Too bad you couldn't finish,' she said sympathetically."

"It's all right; I'm rather glad to be footloose."

"Well, I'd dreamed of seeing you land high as a writer or something like that. I'll hand you this right now. It's a big advantage to a woman to know how to talk to men; real men—the ones who earn the big salaries. They have brains themselves and they respect them in girls, a lot of silly ideas to the contrary notwithstanding. Just by knowing Thackeray I'm the assistant manager of the ready to wear department in this grand emporium—the youngest assistant in the house. Funny, but it's true!"

Asked for an elucidation of this statement Irene explained that the general superintendent of the store, who had power of life and death over everything pertaining to it, was Thackeray-mad. Learning this she had carelessly referred to "Becky Sharp" in a chance conversation with him in the elevator on a day when he deigned to notice her. In a week she had been called to his office and promoted.

"Oh, don't imagine he was leading up to anything; he's a gentleman with a wife and three children and teaches a Sunday school class. His wife invited me to their house for Sunday dinner awhile back and I was never so bored in my life. But I did manage to show an intelligent interest in his Thackeray collection, so I guess I'll hold my job."

Irene had finished at the high school two years before Grace, but the difference in their ages was not to be calculated in years. Grace had always looked up to Irene as to a superior order of being.

"About those correspondence courses, Grace," Irene was saying. "I don't believe I'll take the English I wrote you about. I'm working one night a week with a French teacher, and I lay out about two nights to stay at home and read—I honestly do. You know I had French in high school; and I'm keeping it up in the hope that the house will send me to Paris next year. You know Shipley's is one of the most progressive houses in the whole West; they certainly treat you white."

"Mother isn't wildly enthusiastic about my going into a store. You know mother; she thinks—"

"I know," Irene caught her up—"she thinks it's not as respectable as working in an office, or teaching a kindergarten. I met Ethel on the street the other day and she told me she'd taken a place with an insurance firm. That suits Ethel; she's better in a place like that. I looked over the office game before I decided to come here, and there's nothing to it. You've got it right; there's a lot more money in knowing how to sell stuff than in filling in insurance policies or hammering a typewriter. It's exciting in a big place like this, particularly in my department. And you can make a good thing of it if you've got the selling gift. My salary is nothing to speak of but I get a bonus—I drew seventy-five dollars last week and I expect to hit the hundred mark before Christmas. They steer the customers who look like real money to me. When you've learned the trick you can make them think it's a disgrace not to buy the highest-priced thing we carry. The women from the country towns who bring their husbands along to help them shop are the easiest. I throw the wrap or whatever it is on my own stately person first, then clap it on the wife, and hubby doesn't dare let his wife suspect he doesn't think her as superb in the thing as I am! You can see that I'm a modest little violet! It's as sure as taxes that we've all got to check our finer feelings if we get anywhere in this world."

"I suppose that's true," Grace replied, delighted at the ease with which Irene solved so many of the riddles of existence. She



The intimations that Irene Kirby was not as good as she ought to be so exasperated Grace that in a spirit of contrariness she hoped they were true.

marveled at her poise, and envied her the light ironic touch she gave to the business of bargain and sale. Irene complained in the most ladylike manner of the chicken salad, which Grace had thought very good. The head waitress listened respectfully and offered to substitute something else, but Irene declined, with the indifference of one to whom petty annoyances are merely incidental and not to be given undue weight.

As they ate their chocolate éclairs Grace became impatient to broach the matter of her own ambition to become a factor in Shipley's, but it seemed a pity to break in upon Irene, who went on tranquilly, discussing their old companions of high school days. Presently, after paying the check, she brought her wrist watch within range of her eyes with a graceful gesture, and disposed of the matter with characteristic ease.

"You thought you might like to come here? Well, they're pretty full in all departments, but I think I've got you fixed. They always have a waiting list, but a word in the right place will take care of that. I didn't wait to ask where you'd rather be; but of course I'd like to have you with me. I can't see you in the toilet goods or infants' wear—it would be unbecoming! I've

spoken to Miss Lupton who manages our employment bureau—she's a very good friend of mine—and I spoke about you to Miss Boardman, the head of my department, and I'll take you up to meet both of them. One of our best girls is leaving unexpectedly—mother sick in Colorado or something, so there's a vacancy. It's all set; you fill out an application blank—they always require that—and give two references. You've had no experience but your figure and general intelligence will more than balance that. They do their best to keep the standard high and it won't be lost on them that you're of a good family and took a dash at college."

"I'm certainly obliged to you, Irene. I didn't know it would be as easy as this—but—" she laughed—"they haven't seen me yet!"

"Don't fish. Your appearance is nothing to complain of; you know that as well as I do. It will be fine to have you where we can talk and play around together as we did in school. That girl who's quitting knows how to sell stuff but her grammar's something awful. Between us we ought to be able to give tone to our end of the shop!"

Miss Lupton received Grace amiably, asked her a few questions and pushed a blank toward her. (Continued on page 86)

Every Young 'Un of this Wildfire Generation Ought to Read

The OLD 'UN

Illustrations by J. D. Gleason

THEY thought he was too old, too cautious, so they laid him on the shelf. But the sea alone can be a sailor's judge—and that's why there's human drama in this stirring tale.

by ROY NORTON

—who wrote "The Plunderer," "The Man of Peace"
and "The Woman on the Beach"

CAPTAIN TOM leaned against a pillar in the fish market dazed, upset, feeling that for the first time in his life he had been confronted with a tally of years. The gray old stone quay with its worn and pitted pavement, with its worn and hollowed stone steps leading down to the boat landing, was deserted. The waves of the high tide that had filled the inner harbor softly lapped over them as if deriding him, and life. For more than sixty years he could remember that same lapping invitation; for more than sixty years recall an endless procession of high tides lapping inward from the sea and the outer harbor, as if perpetually and recurrently intent on storming Brixham town. And for more than twenty years, whenever the trawlers went out in fleet formation for a long cruise, he had been chosen as Admiral. Until today!

Always, in his father's, his grandfather's and his great-grandfather's time the same custom had prevailed in the selection of an Admiral; for the fishermen, being free men, registered nowhere save in the staid moth-eaten registers of shore men called "The Customs," recognizing no discipline that was not self-imposed, acknowledging no superior save the one elected from their own ranks, always came together when a great cruise was impending, and there in the market, whose auction bells were silent, whose buyers had withdrawn, whose dealers had disappeared, named him whom they would follow and obey. To be elected Admiral of their own fleet was to them a higher honor than to be an Admiral of a royal navy, for was not their own Admiral chosen in recognition of his skill, his seamanship, his record of achievement?

And now, after twenty years, Skipper Tom was discarded in favor of a younger man. The blow had fallen unexpectedly, because he had for so long been accustomed to this bestowal of authority that he had accepted it as one of the certainties, like the rise and fall of the tides, the equinoctial changes, the full

or waning moons. He was aware of a dull and surprised humiliation, as if his fellows with whom he had worked throughout his life no longer trusted him; but, standing with hands in pockets, and with his gray, clear old eyes fixed abstractedly, absently, on the forest of gently swaying masts beyond the inner harbor wall, he bravely concealed his wounds from the other skippers who, now that the name of "Admiral Pearson" was announced, began moving away.

"I suppose it do be rough on Skipper Tom," said one man speaking to a companion as they passed without observing him. "But he be too old. Us must have what they calls new blood."

"Ay! but—Skipper Pearson, he bain' the same as the old 'un by my way of thinkin'. True, the old 'un be proper cautious, and maybe sometimes us ain't done as much as us might, but—us ain't never lost a ship with the old 'un, have us?"

"Ay! But Captain Tom be too old to be Admiral any more. He be too cautious, as if he was afraid to take any risks."

Captain Tom overheard this also without visible sign of distress, but inwardly hurt. He regarded the other skippers who were moving away and saw that some of them averted their glances, whilst others hailed him with undue friendliness. It was only in the eyes of other very old and tired men like himself, other men with time-bent shoulders and white heads and white beards, that he read a great compassion and understanding. It was as if they too had heard the inevitable knell of youth, the public condemnation of the aged.

With a sudden desire to be alone Captain Tom hastened away from the market, trudging down its long sheltered length and out into the narrow street that bordered it, where many of the roofs of houses were grotesquely sagged as if at last the centuries of their endurance were weakening, and then finally turned into the Overgang that climbed steeply upward toward the cliffs.

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this Great Story About—



There, far below him, he saw the fleet he was no longer to command. "Too old!" he mused. "Too cautious. eh? But am I?"

When finally alone he leaned his elbows on a wall and looked downward at the harbor. There, far below him, he saw the fleet that he was no longer to command. Two hundred ships, trim masted, trim hulled, trim bowed, and swung by the tide, seemed facing him, regarding him, waiting for him. They courtesied, gently, sedately, rhythmically. On but one or two were the enormous trawl nets hoisted up for forty or fifty feet to the mainmast heads, drying, with their protecting loops of cod ends sprayed like drooping festoons of black seaweed from their meshes. His keen old eyes picked out his own ship, the *Seagull*, once the finest of the fleet; but now despite her beauty of line and freshness of paint, she too appeared old-fashioned and

approaching obsolescence. "Us be too old, eh? And no longer wanted! But, after all, be us?" he muttered.

He straightened his huge shoulders, lifted an arm, and clutched it and felt its muscles with a heavy-knuckled and time-battered hand.

"And you," he soliloquized, looking out at the sea to its very far horizon, "can anyone know you better than I? Haven't I lived within sight or sound or feel of you for more'n sixty-five years? Is there anything about you that you haven't told me or that I don't know? And are you too goin' to cast me off—now that I'm old?"

But the sea, blue, indifferent, gave him no answer and no hope. Instead it seemed to convey to him the warning that thousands of other men and thousands of other fleets which it had borne had come and gone, ephemerally, yielding to the inevitable, whilst it alone endured. A great envy of the endurance of inanimate objects engrossed him: the high cliffs, red or gray; the stern headlands of Berry Head, and the lonely bleak isles of the Thatcher and the Lion; the wide-flung sweep of Torbay; the very roofs of the ancient houses of Brixham that, bordering narrow streets, lay jumbled below. He remembered now that through one street so narrow that the state coach had found it difficult to pass, the Prince of Orange had come more than two hundred years before and had evinced alarm, and therefore been accused of being "too cautious."

He, the dethroned Admiral of a fishing fleet, brushed a heavy hand across his brows and pondered over the justice of two words, "too cautious." Somehow those two words he had overheard down there on the quay hurt the most, for they sounded like disparagement of his courage. To be too old, he reflected, was no disgrace, but to be "too cautious," carried uglier meaning. Cautious? Was he? Perhaps so. Any man who had spent more than fifty years upon the sea must have learned to fear its insensate rages, its murderous destructiveness, its overwhelming might, although he might love it when alone at the wheel or helm as the end of the midwatch neared and the dawn came gently up over quietly brooding depths, or when beneath star-strewn vaults soft winds crooned lullabies through the rigging. But did this profundity of intimate knowledge unfit one for that honor of which he had so long and so secretly been proud, Admiralty, to be called the "grand old man of the fleet?" Would they no longer refer to him in such eulogistic and loving phrase? He was bewildered by thought, and again resumed his way, trudging heavily, monotonously, wearily.

Some strange vagary impelled him to turn out of his customary

route. It led him past a cottage set back a few yards from the old and worn road, a cottage in front of which was a tiny, carefully groomed garden with homely flowers and a strip of lawn upon which a pair of little girls were playing. They looked so much alike as to be indistinguishable and Captain Tom paused as if aroused from his abstraction, looked at them more closely and muttered, "They be the twins. Bob Pearson's kids." He touched his cap peak to the matronly woman who just then appeared in the framework of climbing geraniums about the door, noted that the sign on the gate, "The Haven," had been newly repainted with golden letters, and once more began his climb.

"Hey, Skipper!" a voice bellowed at him over the top of an old wall, and he looked up to recognize one of his own crew, a man but little younger than himself and usually referred to by others as "The Grouch."

"Be it true what that lubber Jim Mast just told me, that they've elected Bob Pearson A'miral of the fleet, or be Jim lyin' as usual?"

"No, he ain't been lyin' this time. It's true," Captain Tom admitted.

"Lord save us!" groaned "The Grouch," and then in proof that it was not uttered in an entirely religious sense burst into a stream of profane and scornful invective, shook his gnarled old hands skyward, seaward, and landward, and despite his years dropped nimbly over the six foot wall and stood in the road beside his skipper.

"I knowed it! I saw it comin' for months, that he was goin' out to get it—what with his standin' drinks whenever he got a chance, and palaverin' this 'un and that 'un, and a hintin' that if he were A'miral he'd make things hum! A carryin' on behind your back, he's been, and now—Us ain't goin' to sail with the fleet, be us?"

"Yes, the *Seagull* sails with the fleet, same as always," said Captain Tom patiently. "Us can't afford to show any ill temper over—over a little thing like that."

"Ill temper?" screamed "The Grouch," quivering with rage. "Ill temper! Ef I were twenty year younger I'd go down there and heave that blighter into the bay, I would! Damn his eyes!"

"Don't 'ee be a fool! Talk sense!" Captain Tom admonished. "It's nothin' to fight about. They do say I be too old an' too cautious. Well, maybe I be. An' I don't know as I wanted the responsibility any more anyhow, an' I be proper glad that Bob's to be the new A'miral," he bravely lied. "What's more, man, if you be doin' as I want 'ee to, you'll say nothin' more about it to anybody."

The old fisherman stopped aghast at such tame submission, and then reiterated, "But I tell 'ee Bob Pearson did 'ee dirt! Worked behind yer back and—"

"An' the Good Book," interrupted Captain Tom, "tells us to forgive them that do us injury."

"An' so I do! An' so I do! After I've damned well soaked 'em!" remarked the veteran. But after Captain Tom had turned the corner and was lost to sight between the high stone walls he spat disgustedly, before stretching up on tiptoe to catch the top of the wall and swing himself over to his own garden, and growled: "By the Great Jehoshaphat! Who'd a thought the skipper'd a taken it layin' down, like that! Hanged ef I don't believe he do be losin' his nerve—but—damn him! I'm for him!"

II

Down in the outer harbor, stared upon by the high cliffs and protected from stormy seas by the breakwater that had been more than a hundred years in building, the trawler fleet took on stores. Boats plied more busily and more frequently than on ordinary occasions. Great round loaves of bread were tossed upward to be deftly caught by waiting hands, and thrown down the gaping companionway. Spare gear was overhauled. Men poked their heads into the lazaretto, overhauled its contents, and decided that everything was complete, or said, "Us needs so-and-so, Skipper." Others critically examined warp or rig and approved or censured. In fleet formation the trawlers were bound for sea.

This was to be a long cruise. A "smoke boat" was to accompany them, to bring supplies when food ran short, to pass through them and collect and convey all the catch to the nearest market. Once not a ship of the fleet save that steam tender had touched shore for nearly three months. Men had forgotten the sight of land and how to stand and walk thereon; but now they had no such expectation. That had been a marvelous voyage from the proceeds of which men of the crews, "sharemen" all,

had bought and paid for homes. It could not be repeated, but there was always hope. And men had forgotten that this memorable epoch was in times when Captain Tom was Admiral of the fleet. That was the irony of it!

Waiting for a breeze, the fleet felt it at last. The main tops'ls that had languidly sagged in wrinkles and creases filled. The huge red mains'ls stiffened like the taut heads of eager drums, resonant to the beat of the winds, throbbing to the call of the sea. Ship after ship moved. Outside the breakwater with its white lighthouse they thrust out running bowsprits, and the red sails increased until they bellied as an accompanying cloud above each wind-driven hull. Ship after ship took the same heel, and as if in unison agreed they behaved with unified restraint. Two hundred and odd they ripped the waves of Torbay, passed the lone islands on the port side and headed away on the cruise. They scattered only enough to prevent blanketing one another from the propelling and favorable winds.

"Old as 'er be, I'll bet the *Seagull* c'd beat that there *Quickstep* in a gale," said the "second hand" of Captain Tom's boat, eying the Admiral's trim ship that had the place of honor.

"Aye! Her could," agreed the white-haired old "third hand" "The Grouch" of the crew who had been with the *Seagull* ever since she had been launched. "Her be the best heavy weather ship ever put to sea. Skipper know'd what he wanted, an' got it. He were a sight younger then an' he says to the builder, 'Damn they plans! Four an' a half good more keel-line an' a yard by a half less overhang by the starn,' an' when they builder chap says 'nought but a fool an' no sailor'd do that,' the old 'un hit 'un so quick did see stars. Then skipper did have ship builded like he wanted her, an'—her be the best ship that ever lived out a starm!"

"Aye! Her be," the mate agreed with a touch of pride as if he too had aided in her designing. "Her be!" And then suddenly, "what the hell do 'ee mean by throwing they sweepin's over that side? That's the weather side—over there! Let me ketch you doin' that again an'—"

He made an angry dash at the new cabin boy and when the latter dodged nimbly down the companionway bent over the opening and bellowed threats, then returned to the ancient mariner and remarked with a grin, "nothin' like larin' they boys right from the start if us is to make proper fishermen outen 'em, eh?"

"Right an' proper," sagely agreed the ancient mariner who had so long before served that apprenticeship, through which every man must pass if he would become a "fisherman" of the Brixham fleet, that he had almost forgotten it.

Up through the broader widths of the channel, tacking, reaching, ever sailing, and gratified by fair winds or temporarily annoyed by contrary breezes, the fleet made its way to the chosen grounds. Sometimes, as they made sail, took long reaches and beat back, the men who moved hastily about the decks envied the steam tender that, independent of the winds, lazily, smokingly unperturbed, held its even way; but always they maintained a suppressed contempt for her crew because those were not sailors, after all. They were men who had not the sporting instinct or the knowledge to gamble with the storms, and the handling of great sheets of canvas where life itself depended upon experience and dexterity.

"Well, the A'miral has picked good ground," Captain Tom said, after they had reached their goal and put in the first successful day. "Bob's not daft. I'd have come here myself. The tender went off today loaded down to the limit. She was deep in water, lads."

They fell into a regular routine, which consisted in taking fleet formation on the Admiral's orders; and then watching for his signal to shoot the trawls, take course, and with a "pulling wind," drag the great submerged nets along the sea floor until the Admiral flew the signal that caused them immediately to spill the wind from their sails and hoist the trawls upward to dump their contents, silvery, wriggling and squirming, on the wet decks.

For several days they worked heavily, and prosperity seemed with them, and then there came a change in the weather. Winds were variable, or, worse, came not at all, and for hours they lay becalmed, lolling on a sullen oily sea.

"I tell 'ee," said "The Grouch" to the "second hand," "Skipper don't like they weather. He's been walkin' up an' down, up an' down, for'ard there, for maybe an hour, a cockin' 'is head sidewise an' a sniffin' the air. When he do that, look out. He knows more about weather than a glass, or all the men in the fleet put together, this new A'miral along with 'em."

He spat contemptuously over the rail, and his companion

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"We're running down on ye," he roared. "Stand by to jump."

grewled, for to the men of the *Seagull*, all of whom had been aboard her for years, it was like a fighting insult that they were no longer flagship of the Brixham fleet.

"An' they said Skipper Tom were too cautious! That's what they said! Said it of he what bean't afraid of anything that ever walked, swam or blew! I don't like to think of it. It fair gets me riled, it do!"

He had opened his lips to vent more of his anger when he was arrested by the clumping of seaboots behind him and turned to look over his shoulder at Captain Tom, who now leaned his elbows on the rail alongside.

"I don't like it," he said. "It aren't natural. If I'm not

mistook, us'll have the heaviest storm us has ever seen. Not dirty weather, nor rough weather, nor half gale, nor full gale, but somethin' wuss'n us has ever seen. I wish us had more sea room! Look over there. Us bean't more'n two mile offshore an'—I know that coast of France! Cliffs and reefs! Bad reefs runnin' offshore. God help us if a storm do break," he ended in the softened voice that he used when speaking to the Deity direct.

The gray-haired mate, who was a Roman Catholic, spontaneously crossed himself as if silently repeating the prayer. The ancient one, who had never entered church nor chapel but had devout religious convictions of his own, and followed his own

form of worship, lifted a hand and glanced at the darkening skies with respect, quite as if behind the dun, somber clouds was One who would note his gaze.

"Winds a haulin' off to east'ard! See it?" bawled the voice of a man who had been lounging over the rail and staring toward the open channel, as if thinking that in that direction lay home.

The crew of the *Seagull* from skipper to cabin boy hastened to that side of the ship and watched. They saw the sails of one after another distant trawler fill, and the tall masts sway and bob under the impetus, and the ships swing round to spill the wind and remain motionless and riding head-on until given orders. The *Seagull* in but a few minutes did the same. The breeze swept inward until the entire fleet was rocking and swaying with booms "smanging," which in Brixham parlance meant they beat and battered from side to side heavily, as if eager to take advantage of the wind.

"A'miral's signals, sir," shouted one of the crew whose younger and quicker eyes were more observant than those of the others. Captain Tom ran across and stared at the flagship, which lay closest inshore. They were to steer sou' by sou'west and were to shoot their trawls. He hesitated for a moment, shook a doubtful head, looked at the sea, the sky and the coast line, and muttered, "I shouldn't have give that order if I were A'miral of the fleet, but us got to obey lest they say I be a coward! But it bean't safe! It bean't safe!"

He turned and quietly gave the orders to his crew. They leaped to action, he in their midst, pulling, hauling, directing at the same time. The black mass of net, scores of yards in length, swept over the weather side of the *Seagull* and disappeared beneath the waves when dragged downward by the heavy trawl beam that held open the mouth of that monstrous bag whose binding "mouth ropes," thick as a leg, and whose steel "heads," built to slide upon the sea floor, combined into a weight that would carry it deep. Fathom after fathom of the thick warp paid out of the for'ard hold. The *Seagull* leaned far over and listed heavily to that work which she had done thousands of times before. It was as if she were a horse, throwing its weight into the collar at the beginning of a long and steep hill, and patiently hopeful to reach the top, knowing that there alone rest and free breathing could be achieved.

Out on a long reach her companions, two hundred and a score, strained in unison, each pulling its trawl across the sea bed. Spritsails, foresails, mainsails, main-topsails, mizzen sails, mizzen-topsails on each were filled until fingers might have drummed upon them as upon a sounding board. Lashed were the helms once the course was set. Lashed together the great fleet seemed as it swept, preserving the same angle and the same speed, leaning alike with uptilted decks, nosing away on the same course, engaged in the same task, the laborious dragging of the trawls that, fathoms deep, swept the floors of the sea.

And then, acting under the Admiral's orders, each ship suddenly luffed until her sails no longer held the wind, and each ship's winches began the hard task of hoisting the trawl. Despite their age and long service the crew of the *Seagull* were still among the smartest in the fleet, for these were veterans all. The cod end of their net had been opened and the catch put in the bunkers below long before some others of the fleet had cleared trawl. The wind was climbing. The oily sluggishness of the sea had changed to enormous swells, as if waiting a signal to break into unleashed waves. The air was heavy and oppressive, despite the gathering drought. Up-channel the horizon was somber, sullen, as if contemplating wrathful devastation.

"Behind that," said Captain Tom, staring with sea-worn and weather-wise eyes, "is the worst storm us has ever seen. If I was A'miral now, I'd send us all out'ard. Us'll need sea room soon, and—there be a worse coast than the other, off there." He pointed into the dusk of the early afternoon that was like the dusk of twilight.



"A'miral givin' orders, sir," shouted the cabin boy, enthusiastic in his first regular cruise.

Captain Tom, huge, broad and bent-shouldered, standing with legs wide apart and ungainly sea-boots as fixed as if built into the deck, glared toward the flagship. For a moment he could not believe it possible that such orders had been given. He brushed a hand beneath his sou'wester to rub it perplexedly over his brow and looked again. It was as if he doubted his vision. His lips shut tight beneath the white mustache and beard. His big chin quivered.

"Good Lord!" he muttered. And then as if to make certain, he moved on his heels and stared again toward the threatening north, at the northwest where banks of clouds seemed surging rebelliously, and out to the west whence came the increasing wind. He suddenly slapped the rail with a big hard palm and roared: "Either the A'miral's mad, or I be a fool. They say I be too cautious, or afraid, an' maybe I be. Boys, A'miral's ordered fleet to shoot trawls again, but I'll be damned if I'll do it. Are you with me?"

His face lightened at the unanimous and hearty growl of assent, proving that the men of his crew still esteemed him the most capable man in the fleet, and were ready to pay for their belief. To refuse deliberately to obey the Admiral's orders

They threw a boy bodily across the raging gap. Then one by one they leaped.

could have but one consequence, withdrawal, forfeiture of profits and shares in the catch and—the *Seagull* was many days' voyage from home. It required courage of convictions. Captain Tom thought of all this and appeared hesitant and reluctant. He was thinking of the needs of his men and what the sacrifice meant to them.

"You needn't bother about us, Skipper," shrilled "The Grouch," as if reading his mind. "Us takes your judgment clean and whole. If they others don't like it, they can go hang!" "Good," said Captain Tom quietly. "Us'll up sail and out. Sea room's what us'll need within another hour."

They fell to work, silently, deftly, with the skill of long companionship in a task. It was scarcely necessary to give an order. The *Seagull* shook herself free, took on way, and slipped out—

with rage, sprang up on the rail, clutched the shrouds with one hand and shook a fist as he cried back: "You block-headed blighter! Ef ever I run foul of you ashore I'll make you eat that or else I'll cut your black heart out!"

He was still sputtering when the mate put brawny arms out, seized him around his legs and jerked him to the deck.

"Stow it, old 'un! Stow the gab!" he cautioned. "All they'll do'll be to laugh at 'ee. Don't 'ee give they swabs that satisfaction. That be a Lowestoft man. He bean't from Brixham, so—shut up!"

The last of the fleet was left behind. Captain Tom felt a great loneliness and regret. He stood moodily and in great depression by the starboard rail staring backward with hurt eyes. They would say many unkind things of him; that he had refused to obey his successor; that he was sore because he had been discarded; that he was as cautious as an old farmwoman carrying a basket of eggs; that he was a coward. He began to doubt himself and questioned again and again whether he was overly cautious and overly careful. But his eyes when he lifted them to scan the blackening horizon, his nostrils that caught the peculiar



scent, wafted from afar, of deep waters and deep seagrowths torn from the bottoms, his keyed expectancy, his straining eardrums,

insisted that his judgment had not been at fault.

"I tell 'ee, Skipper be right. I be jiggered if he bean't! They's the wust starm a-comin' as has been ever see'd. Look 'ee off sta'b'd!" The ancient was again shouting in his shrill, aged voice and Captain Tom looked. He saw off in the distance, advancing upon them in fury, the unmistakable advent of the storm.

All his apathy disappeared. He leaped to action as an old war horse leaps and quivers to the sound of the bugle in a charge. He bellowed orders to helmsman and men, and in frantic haste they doused tops'l, fores'l and double reefed the great mains'l leaving nothing but sprit and mizzen set to hold the *Seagull's* head into the wind. Before their task was done the storm was upon them, pouncing down, invisible but terrifying, without form or shape, but endowed with a million rending hands. The *Seagull* shivered, quivered, and fought for life. Staunch as she was, handled as well as nothing but supreme seamanship could handle, victor in a thousand other battles, she seemed sobbing for breath, surviving only through desperate resolution. Time and again in that irregular, tempest-riven sea, she could not throw off the tons of water that swept her from bow to stern before another deluge threatened to send her to the bottom and end the fight.

There was no regularity in the enormous waves that hammered and battered her. They could not be timed and met. Black clouds swept down until they whipped the waves, seemed thrown upward, to fall again as if they bounced like great balloons, tossed, retossed, and tossed again. Then, as if the wind had savagely interfered, they were swept away, swirling, torn, momentarily vanquished, and the men of the *Seagull* caught their breaths and stared back through the rift in the murk. When last there had been visibility, the tops'ls and upper parts of the great

ward. The crews of some of the trawlers they passed, who were made up of younger men, derided the *Seagull*, shouting, "That's right! Home's the place for you'n if the weather be smirchy . . . Go it, old 'un. They said 'ee be proper cautious, and 'ee be!"

Captain Tom stood with his legs planted, motionless, mute, but the men of his crew, gray or white to the man, bawled back profane and angry replies. It was hard to run away. The last stinging comment came from a Lowestoft man who shouted: "Ye should change yer vane. Ye need a white feather instead of a blue flag at yer peak!" And the ancient mariner, quivering

red mains'ls of the fleet had been seen, but now nearly all these were gone. Here and there one fled like a frightened bird. A sense of terrifying disaster overwhelmed the men of the *Seagull*. They stared at one another, as they stood, wet, dripping, breathless, and surmised the truth. A curious lull in the storm had enveloped them, as if the tempest, overstrained in its initial charge, had paused to gather breath.

"Around with her, lads! Steady now. Stand by to jump. Move lively. Back we go for—by God!—they need us there!"

Captain Tom's voice had the old trumpet sound. They bellowed approval, and took the risk. They even gave her another rag of sail, and she staggered as if in protest, wallowed for an instant, and buckled into it. She fled like a seahawk back over her course, ripping the waves, reckless of the danger of being pooped if the storm increased, and tore down upon the scene of wreck. She came upon ships in flight with torn sails, and then, closer inshore, ships that lay supinely upon beam ends with not a living thing clinging thereon. There seemed nothing to save. And then, well inshore, they saw two trawlers valiantly fighting for something and bore down upon them.

"They're trying to drift a line down to one that's taken the rocks," the mate announced from the post of vantage in the shrouds that he had recklessly dared. "They on the outer reef be dismayed. They be hangin' on and—they be dead men!"

He was suddenly pulled aside by Captain Tom, who climbed aloft and, clinging there, swaying, tossed as if the *Seagull* in agony wished to shake him loose, peered landward. Instantly he dropped downward to the deck. "Head on again, lads! Bring her up! Take a chance," he shouted. And again the *Seagull* took the great risk, wallowed, threw off the water and rode head on. She drifted perilously near one of the fleet that was still trying to float a rope down to the wreck.

"Her be the A'miral's *Quickstep*," shouted a man through cupped hands and then: "God help 'em. They be done. Us can't get a line aboard. Us be nearly finished ourselves."

From his precarious hold Captain Tom surveyed the situation. He saw high cliffs, and torn belts of foam stretching seaward, showing the reefs on which the unfortunate *Quickstep* had been caught and was now being hammered as she rose and fell. Oak had never been grown or fashioned to a hull that could long withstand that battering. Clinging to that wreckage were five human beings, one, doubtless, the man who had superseded him in command of the fleet. But there was no time to lose, for already the reefs were gaining their mastery and the waves seemed eager to end their work.

"Boys," he called down to the men beneath, though all were battered and scarred by years, "them has but one chance in a

thousand. If us tries to save 'em, us has but one chance in a thousand more. It's never been done, and mebbe it can't be done. But can us let 'em drown without tryin', or else drownin' ourselves? If you agree, we'll try to pick some of 'em off or—drown with 'em. What say?"

It was much to ask. They were too sea-wise not to grasp what he meant, and the precarious issues. Three of them had wives and children at home, and then they remembered that out there, clinging to a wreck, washed by higher waves, despairing,

were other men who also had wives and children far away in Brixham town—far, very far, very placid as they remembered it. It was as if it had been years since last they sailed from that warm and friendly port. To regain its great and inviolable shelter seemed now the greatest of dreams. They could accomplish it if they but sailed away. But sailing away left those others out there on the black and breaking wreck to an inevitable doom. God! Hadn't they already seen wrecks enough with not a living thing clinging to the capsized sides and keels? Could the rescue of the Admiral, who in daring folly had brought this deluge of sorrow, assuage the bitterness of such wholesale loss?

They hesitated, weighed, considered, there in the lull of the storm, looking now at the black, breaking thing on the reef, and thence upward to the cruel cliffs, to the long lines of thundering waves that battered against the foot wall, and finally at their skipper who, huge and gnarled, clung and swayed above them, looking downward into their eyes, waiting for them to answer.

"A man can't die more than once. He hasn't more than one life to give, lads," he said in a voice that sounded inordinately solemn and quiet in that wait. "But—as for me—mine's most done anyhow! If this is my day to drown—well—I'll drown with no complaint. But I can't live after today with the memory that I didn't do all I could to help the others off. Do we try?"

The gray-haired mate, who had grandchildren of his own, stared up at him with somber eyes. The one man whose life was still strong and virile, shuffled his feet and looked pityingly across at the constantly

breaking wreck of the *Quickstep*. The man at the helm dodged and swayed with the turgid roll of the *Seagull*, seemingly intent upon his task, but in reality weighing his love of life against what he might remember if he failed in this minute of vital distress. It may have been the voice, querulous, creaking, time-worn, of the ancient mariner that decided them. This "Grouch!" This agnostic in the midst of men who went humbly to chapel or to confession!

"By the love of Christ!" it cried. "Although there's none to care for me, and I be all alone, and I like to live, I can't leave 'em there that way. I'd rather end it (Continued on page 111)

Does One Ever Get Too Old to Do the Really Big Things?

If you were to take a census of the big, active figures in the world today—the men who are doing big things—you would find that most of them are more than sixty-five years of age. Since the war we've stopped calling this "the young man's age."

Chauncey M. Depew, for instance, is eighty-seven; so is Dr. Charles W. Eliot. Lyman Abbott is eighty-six; "Uncle Joe" Cannon, eighty-five; Lord Bryce is eighty-three, as are John Wanamaker and Marquis Shigenobu Okuma. John D. Rockefeller is eighty-two; Henry Holt, the publisher, and Henry Watterson, the editor, are eighty-one; and Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes is eighty, the same age as Georges Clemenceau, "the tiger of France."

George Brandes, the writer, is seventy-nine; Senator Knute Nelson is seventy-eight, which is the age of the Rev. Russell H. Conwell and Justice Joseph McKenna of the Supreme Court. Doctor Harvey W. Wiley is seventy-seven; so is George Haven Putnam, the publisher. Sarah Bernhardt is seventy-six, of an age with Elihu Root. Thomas A. Edison is seventy-four, born in the same year as Alexander Graham Bell. The Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour is seventy-three; Justice William R. Day of the Supreme Court is seventy-two, as are Luther Burbank, Frances Hodgson Burnett and Samuel Gompers. Henry Cabot Lodge is seventy-one, as are Cyrus H. K. Curtis, the publisher, Albert B. Cummins, Daniel Carter Beard and David Starr Jordan.

Marshal Ferdinand Foch is seventy. That's the age of Sir Oliver Lodge. Henry Van Dyke, the author, is sixty-nine. Joseph Jacques Joffre was born the same year.

John Drew, the actor, is sixty-eight, as is Sir Hall Caine, and Robert Underwood Johnson and Thomas Nelson Page, both authors and former Ambassadors. Robert B. Mantell, the actor, is sixty-seven, also George Eastman, Frank A. Munsey, the publisher, and John Sharp Williams. Dr. L. Emmett Holt, Samuel Rea and John Hays Hammond are sixty-six.

George Bernard Shaw, Edward L. Doheny, John S. Sargent, Judge Louis D. Brandeis, Henry Morgenthau and former President Woodrow Wilson are sixty-five.



*A story that tells you—more
than any other story you ever
read—of the heart of Broadway*

GREASE-PAINT

By RITA WEIMAN

—who wrote "The Acquitall" and other noted plays and stories

Illustrations by Harrison Fisher

SHE had weary eyes—eyes with the weight of centuries of knowledge upon them—eyes that could no longer open wide with astonishment at anything life might hold. The lashes were so long, so dark and straight that they were like a veil of night shadowing the grayness beneath.

A slow smile lifted the corners of her mouth, then let them droop before the smile was really born. Her walk, as she trailed from the first line of show-girls in her wide-spread bird of paradise costume, was as measured as the muse of tragedy.

And yet she was only twenty-six.

That was Naomi Stokes, who counted numberless acquaintances but few friends, who knew many men better than they cared to be known but few as well as she might have cared to know them.

Broadway was a playground to Naomi but she had long since learned that in the game played there, none are winners. Time is the *croupier* who rakes in the spoils and at time Naomi had ceased to smile even wearily. He stood with his long arm suspended, ready, it seemed to her, to pounce upon each hour she might hold dear, jealous of all she had crowded into one short life. Man she knew too well to fear but the *croupier* with whom she had gambled so long, she dared not look in the face. And as one sings in the dark to silence fear, so she had developed a philosophy of life which she held close in those moments when she might be tempted to take measure of things. She could not afford to pause long or to think much.

Of that glittering section which stretches like some bejeweled,

recumbent queen of the night from Forty-second to Fiftieth Streets, Naomi was such an integral part that if a night passed without her appearance at one or another of the tightly wedged restaurants, their habitués wondered. Her name, which in the theater was merely that of another show-girl, had for so long swung from lip to lip in the after theater life of the White Way, that soon it would of necessity be relegated to that past which hangs so cruelly over the present. Naomi knew this. And more than once alone in her tiny two-room apartment and in spite of her philosophy, she wondered what would come after.

It was on a night following a day when the dregs of life had tasted particularly bitter that Naomi and four others went to supper with Marshall Kent.

Kent having more money than he could spend enjoyed spending it on Broadway. Having nothing better to do he had never looked for anything better. He and Naomi were good pals in their way. He liked to stare through her lashes at the puzzle beneath. Most women were so revealing.

But tonight she resented his set gaze, the ironic twitch of his thin lips. After her nasty, self-disclosing day, she wanted a friend. She wanted some one to whom she could be something more than heavy eyes and auburn-tinted hair, some one with whom she could share thoughts—and fears. But "Marshy" Kent had never given her friendship. No man had.

All through supper she was silent, with a hard, shell-like silence her companions could not break. Finally she pushed her plate to one side and her glance sifted the smoke-thickened air.

Beyond the table in a space so small that they might have been squirrels chasing their tails, the crowd jostled and elbowed and glared at one another in an effort to keep time to a stamping, hilarious jazz. In the doorway beyond, another crowd jostled and elbowed and glared at one another and fought for the privilege of slipping crisp greenbacks to supercilious headwaiters.

Naomi swept it with a noxious sense of disgust. Suddenly it seemed a ton weight, as if the ceiling like some infernal machine were descending upon her. She lifted her shoulders and her head went back. Oh, for a breath of real, fresh air!

"What's the matter, my dear?" put in Kent. "Off your feed?"

"No." She brought her eyes toward him, then they drifted back to the crowd at the door. "I was just thinking what a joke they are on themselves, fighting like that to get into a stuffy old hole where they're going to be held up and fleeced."

Kent laughed.

"Aren't you worth the price of admission? You're one of the exhibits, you know."

He looked down at the easy movement of the white shoulders under the narrow beaded straps that were the sole support of her black gown.

"Anyone with the eyes and arms of Naomi will always count," he consoled.

She pulled from his gaze.

"Oh, what's the use! You know I don't matter to them any more than to you. You play around with me here because you haven't any better way to pass your time. And they, poor idiots—"

"By Jove, you *are* off your feed!"

She turned her back on his low, impudent chuckle.

His tolerant eye traveled over the shoulder turned from him to the hot, wild mass clamoring at the doorway. Suddenly he became alert and a second later was on his feet, without apology pushing his way around the dance floor. Naomi saw him make for a man with a big frame and graying mustache who lingered impotently at the rear of the crowd. Kent reached out, grabbed his hand and wrung it as though he never wanted to let it go. She wondered vaguely what it would be like to have some one as glad to see her. He passed a word to the headwaiter and escorted by Kent, the party was led to a table a few paces from where she sat.



The man glanced about with the curiosity, half amused, half critical of the sight-seeing stranger. Back of him came a girl of twenty-one or so with eager gray eyes a thousand years younger than Naomi's, white teeth showing through parted lips, and hair the dense, dusky black of an Indian's. At her side walked a young man. As he passed Naomi their glances met. They looked for an instant with that odd, unintentional arresting which means that two out of a vast throng have momentarily become individuals. Naomi's slow gaze followed as he went on and it seemed to her that in the allotting of places he deliberately chose the one facing her.

Kent hovered over his friend with beaming enthusiasm. The ironic twitch of his lips was gone. The somewhat sagging shoulders of the man who keeps flesh down by massage rather than exercise had straightened. He scribbled his address. He took theirs. He admonished the waiter to treat them well and apologized finally for having to return to his own table.

Naomi watched the younger man's face as Marshall Kent took his place beside her. No, she had not been mistaken. She, who knew so well how to read men's eyes, saw in his dark ones a look of intense, concentrated interest. The girl next to him saw it too,



"Well, Eve, do we tempt young Adam to eat the apple or do we let him go home in peace and grow them?"
 "I think we marry him," she said quietly.

and following it, thought she had never seen a face more fascinating than the one so smoothly white with its heavy-fringed lids and wave of glinting hair across the forehead. It was artificial, of course, but then you got used to that in New York. Her clear gray eyes went swiftly back to the dark ones that were fastened on Naomi's.

Kent pulled in his chair and settled back.

"Well, little Marshy's all het up!" one of the girls prompted.

"Who's your friend?"

He was still beaming.

"Fellow I haven't seen since college—Alec McConnell. I was chucked. He went through to the finish. Mining engineer—big man in Idaho today."

"And the other two?" queried Naomi casually.

"The one staring at you, my dear, is the son of Bill Dixon of Dixonville, Oregon, big ranch owner, king of the apple country."

"And the girl?"

"Little friend of his being chaperoned by McConnell and his wife. First visit to the big town. Is that all?"

Once more Naomi's drowsy gaze met the one that had not moved from her and a faint flush surged under her skin. As her lids fell

now, they covered something of the look of the gamester. It was a calculating look that weighed possibilities, one she was quick to hide.

Kent detected it rather by instinct than otherwise.

"Oh, have a heart, Naomi!" he teased. "He's so young and tender."

Naomi turned slowly in his direction. She said nothing for the moment, but waited until the others got up to dance.

"Well?" He was intrigued by her silence. "Well, Eve, do we tempt young Adam to eat the apple or do we let him go home in peace and grow them?"

"I think we marry him," she said quietly.

Kent gave a start that brought him upright. Then he grinned that drawling grin tinged with cynicism. The idea of anyone marrying Naomi was amusing. She read his thought as plainly as if it had been put into words and her head went up suddenly.

"My dear Naomi—if you'll pardon my brutality, I should say—not a chance in the world!"

"Why?"

"In the first place I have a hunch that little girl, Nan Crawford, has a pretty firm hold on young Bill. I suspect she's here

"You've got to love him, Miss Stokes! You've got to make him happy. I'd give my life for him. That's the way you've got to love him, too. If you don't—if you fail him—ever—I'll kill you!"



trousseauing. In the second, Bill is probably more sophisticated than you or I imagine. This isn't his first visit to New York."

"I'm going to marry him just the same."

"And go out and live on an Oregon ranch, old dear?"

"Yes."

He laughed aloud this time.

"You'd look sweet in a sunbonnet and gingham dress."

"Just what do you mean by that?" she asked, not quite sure what emphasis to put on "sweet."

"Just this—you belong here as surely as grease-paint belongs in the theater."

"No woman belongs here," she flung at him. "There isn't a woman made who hasn't the right to a home."

"Then why does she start here?"

"Because she's young and a fool—in nine cases out of ten. Because she thinks this is living."

She pulled a bit of lace from her bag and dabbed at her eyes. Kent's mouth opened. It was the first time he had seen Naomi cry.



In that moment Naomi knew that Nan Crawford's words were not mere bravado, not foolish threat. She was battling in her own way for the thing she loved.

1/2

"Don't mind me!" She met his astonishment with a swift effort to pull herself together. "I've had a rotten day."

"How, my dear?"

"Oh, just the realization that tonight it's this, and in two years—at the outside—it'll be ham and eggs and a lunch counter—if I'm lucky."

"Nonsense!"

"Oh, yes! I'll just drop out and you'll forget me—like the rest. What's become of Emy Steward—and Cora Greene—and

Ray Granville? You don't even know, and you used to give parties for them like this one."

He was silent knowing she spoke the truth. Like comets across a glittering sky those beautiful girls had gleamed and gone. Gone when their beauty had gone, vanished into the night that engulfed them, too proud or too forgotten to accept the humiliation of charity.

"We don't last long, boy," she added grimly. "And I'm one of those who can't keep on fooling herself. I've had a beast of a day."

"Hence the ranch idea in Oregon."

"Yes." A queer twist lifted her lips—then dropped them. "Inspiration, I call it. The Limited that will carry me away from the poorhouse!"

"You'll never put it over."

"Sporting enough to lay odds on it, Marshy, old dear?" Again the flash of challenge.

In all justice to Marshall Kent, it must be admitted that under normal conditions he would not have taken her up. But the silver flask that reposed on Marshy's hip had been refilled on frequent visits to a side chamber just off the main room. He looked out of the corner of an eye at Naomi stepping in where angels might fear to tread, and the flushed, grudging admiration of gamester for gamester darted in the glance.

"You're on!" he said.

"And you'll keep off!" she urged, a bit breathless.

"Yes—I'll give you ground. What stakes?"

"If I lose—"

"Yes?"

"We'll make it a hundred perfectos, best brand."

"Nice and impersonal!" observed Marshy, head to one side, now well into the game. "And if you win?"

"The handsomest wedding present in town!"

"I call that odds in your favor."

With a faint smile she leaned nearer, hand outstretched to clinch it.

"Hold on! What's the time limit?"

"When he starts west, I start with him."

"It's a go. Only don't expect any help from me."

"I won't—except an introduction when he stops here on the way out."

"What makes you think he'll stop?"

"I know he will. He'll find some excuse to."

And he did, of course. Waveringly, as he drew nearer the magnet of her eyes, he paused and tapped Marshy's shoulder. The latter sprang up.

"By-the-way, Mr. Kent, we're such a bunch of rubes—I thought you might recommend the best show in town for tomorrow night."

Naomi waited as Marshy considered.

"Why don't you send your friend to ours?" she suggested in a low voice apparently to him alone.

"What one is that?" asked the friend, flashing eagerly into the breach.

Kent introduced him then to the upraised eyes round the table. But he saw only Naomi's veiled ones. She gave him the name of the musical comedy and the theater—nothing more. And as he bowed and rejoined the older man and the girl with the dusky hair who were standing in the doorway, Marshall Kent dropped into his chair again.

"Quick work, Naomi," he murmured, "and Machiavellian method. One move more from you and the apple wouldn't have looked nearly so inviting."

CHAPTER II

My dear Miss Stokes:

This will be the fourth time I've seen the show and the third time I've asked you to go to supper. If you tell me you can't again, I'll think you don't want to—and quit. No, on the whole, I won't quit. I've never done that in my life. I'll just hang round and bother you till you come, so better come tonight. I'll be waiting for you.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM DIXON.

Naomi lifted the head-dress of paradise that swayed round her face and handed it absently to the dresser. Numberless notes she had received during her show-girl career, but never one signed just like that. "Sincerely." Probably it was a card index of the man.

She laid it down, the look of Eve through her lashes. Three nights she had put him off. Yes, the apple might safely be held a bit closer tonight—but not too close.

He was waiting just within the stage door, his hands deep-thrust into the pockets of his overcoat. As she came up the stairs that led from the chorus dressing rooms under the stage, he stepped forward and both hands came out of the pockets.

She clasped the right one, smiled up at him and his warm brown eyes shone. He piloted her to a car at the curb and as the door slammed he leaned forward with the glow of his eyes reflected in his voice.

"Gee, this is great! I was afraid you'd turn me down again." He did not wait for an answer but crowded into the next few

moments all the hours of thought which her refusal of his invitations had lengthened into days. "You must have thought me an awful rube, staring at you the way I did the other night. I've been afraid it made you sore at me. Did it?"

"No woman thinks a man's a rube for staring at her."

"I couldn't help it. I just couldn't take my eyes off you."

In the shadows of the car she smiled softly.

"Funny, how I walked into that place, cussing the smoke and noise and then saw you. Lord, suppose I hadn't gone!"

She smiled again.

He went on.

"You've seen me every night in the first row at the theater, haven't you?"

"Yes, I've seen you."

"And I think it's a punk show," his teeth flashed in a quick grin. "So now you know why I came."

"One lone show-girl can't be worth a speculator's ticket four times," she prompted.

"She's worth lots more than that. Thank you for coming tonight."

His voice turned serious. He tucked the robe into her corner of the seat breathing the faint fragrance that wafted from her like an aura. It was the ghost of grease-paint and flowers, of powder and perfume—that strange, exotic potpourri of the theater that clings to its women like essence of old Egypt.

She gazed down at the bent head, at the hands that brushed hers with a boyish lingering as they drew the robe closer. How young he seemed: A man on Broadway who had something to learn! It was like finding a canary in a cage of monkeys!

The strange exuberance was with her as they made their way among crowded tables to the one he had reserved. Amber satin clung to her supple body and long jet earrings almost touched her shoulders. And a curve softer than any her lips had known for years lifted their corners.

His tanned skin and eyes that glowed seemed lifted straight to the sun rising above the mountains. She took a deep breath, as if from him she could get the stimulus of great outdoors.

He looked at the slope of her white shoulders, at the droop of her eyes, as if in her were epitomized the lure of the city.

"You're so—different," he began, "So awfully different. I guess that's no news to you, though."

"So are you—different."

"Me?"

"Yes. Tell me about yourself."

"Oh, nothing much to tell about me."

And he proceeded to tell it while they went through two courses. She got a vivid picture of Bill Dixon, a young colt, straining against harness of any kind; a lad loathing routine to such an extent that he had quit college rather than submit to it; a young man, impulsive as the wind, more tied to the picturesqueness of ranch life than to the business of it; an only son worshiped by the man who had paved the way, who was both father and mother to him.

They danced. He was not a good dancer, but as his arm went round her and his dark head bent to her glinting one, she felt herself completely encompassed. His bigness, his nearness, gave her a sudden sense of helplessness that frankly frightened her. The reins of the future must be held in her cool hands, not in his.

"I'm going to guess your age," she announced when they were once more at opposite sides of the table, "if you'll promise not to guess mine."

"I don't give a darn how old you are."

"Oh, I'm not as old as all that. But you—you're twenty-five."

"Next month. Bet, at that, I'm older than you."

"You are," she lied, without a quiver.

"But you're the sort of woman who'll always be young—even when you're wrinkled and gray. It's your coloring," he went on, promptly contradicting himself. "That wonderful white skin—I've never seen skin so white—and the sheen of your hair and those eyes that make a fellow sort of—sort of want to jump in."

The eyes smiled at him with infinite promise.

"I think we're going to like each other," she said.

"I know one of us does already," he grinned.

"You're a dear," she vouchsafed.

They saw each other every day after that. He managed to bring it about, either for luncheon or early dinner or after the theater—at least he thought he was the one who brought it about. Occasionally they drove out to the country. But the countryside near New York rather amused him than otherwise.

"It all seems sort of puny to me," he (Continued on page 126)



Where the nation first began to go dry. Crusaders praying Ward's saloon out of business at Hillsboro, Ohio, in 1873.

The Hootch Runners

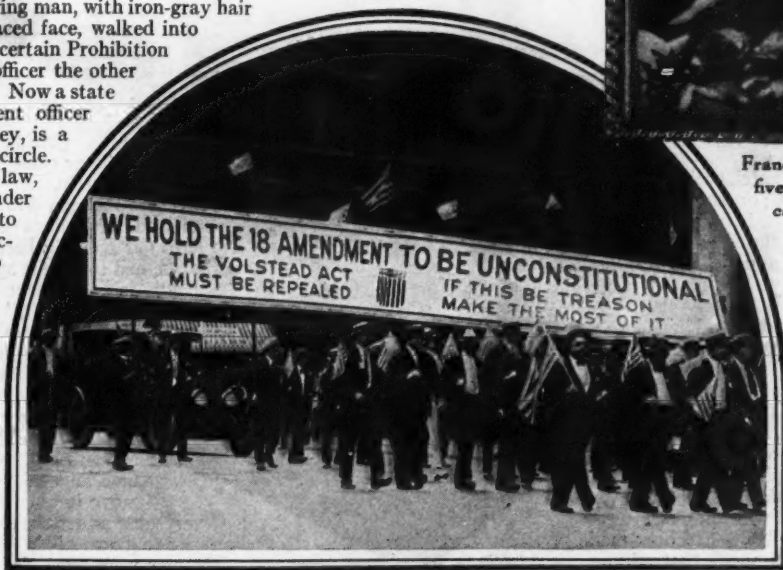
The second of the "Who's Drinking in America?" articles, in which WILLIAM G. SHEPHERD tells the real adventure—and the real truth—of Prohibition enforcement. This month he answers the question—

Where do we get it?

A HUGE lumbering man, with iron-gray hair and a seam-laced face, walked into the office of a certain Prohibition enforcement officer the other day and said, "Hello." Now a state Prohibition enforcement officer in Newark, New Jersey, is a little lord in his own circle. With one hand, by our law, he deals out alcohol, under the permit system, to druggists and manufacturers and others who are supposed to have a right to use alcohol; with the other, he tries to take alcohol from those who ought not to have it. If he's honest, he's too busy to be pleasant. If he isn't honest, he's bound to be mean and wary. Honest or not honest, many of them sit with revolvers on their desks. Not many folks are able to say



Frances Willard, for twenty-five years a leader in the cause of Prohibition.



A July 4th parade in New York staged as a protest against Prohibition.

"Hello," right off the bat, to a Prohibition enforcement officer. But this big man did.

He also showed the state enforcement officer a piece of paper—his credentials from headquarters in Washington. And then he said calmly to the lordly local official: "I'd like two of your men."

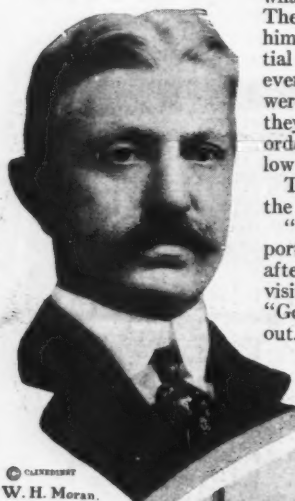
"What for?" asked the local man testily.

"Confidential," said the headquarters man.

That word "confidential" ends it. In this case it meant that the two men borrowed from the state official would not even have the right to tell their local boss what they were doing. Their nightly reports to him would run "confidential work;" he would not even know on what they were working except that they were obeying the orders of the grim, big fellow from Washington.

The Washington man got the men.

"Please tell them to report to me at my hotel this afternoon," said the big visitor as he smilingly said "Good day," and lumbered out.



© CLARENDON
W. H. Moran,
prosecutor of
whisky bond
forgers.

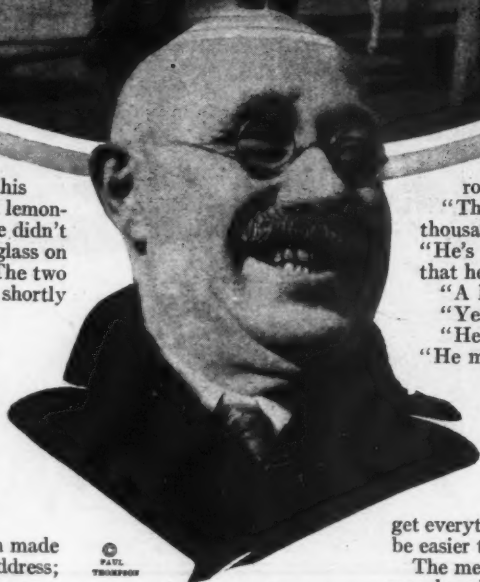


Rangers raiding
a river "joint" in
search of cached liquor.

He went back to his hotel, peeled off his clothes and went to bed; ordered a hot lemonade, threw away half of it because he didn't want to drink it, set the half-filled glass on the table beside him and waited. The two enforcement officers who came in shortly thought he was sick.

"I want you to go down to Number so-and-so, on such-and-such a street," said the big fellow, from under the covers, "and see what's going on down there. Come back and tell me. I'm not feeling so good."

The two enforcement officers looked at each other and smiled. There was delight on their faces. They knew well enough what was going on at that address. Complaints had been made to the police of Newark about that address; also to the sheriff; and also to their own office. But no policeman and no deputy sheriff or federal enforcement officer had ever be-



© PAUL
THOMPSON

"Pussyfoot" Johnson, a
crusader for Prohibition.

fore been sent to investigate. Now they were getting their chance, at last.

They came back to the "sick" room shortly.

"There's a man down there making wine—thousands of gallons of it," they reported. "He's got one big barrel in the place so big that he had to take it apart to get it in."

"A hogshead?" asked the "sick man."

"Yes, bigger'n that," said one of the agents.

"He's got two places," reported the agents.

"He makes his wine in the big place. He's got a store farther down the street where he sells it."

"All right!" said the sick man.

"You go out and hire as many trucks as you need. Go to the small place first and take everything there and move it over to the big place. We'll

get everything under the same roof that way; it'll be easier to guard it."

The men went out. An hour later the "sick" man heard the roar of a mob in the street. He couldn't see from his window what it was about, but he heard later. A crowd of 4,000 people,



Captain Stevens and his Texas Rangers fording the Rio Grande after a battle with liquor smugglers.

seeing the enforcement officers raiding the small place, gathered around and began to jeer and hoot and throw stones. One of the enforcement officers had lifted his gun in a peculiar way. It was a knack of his. Though the crowd didn't know it, this particular officer, once in the wild Oklahoma Indian country, had fought with five men who were trying to get whisky to the Indians. The next day citizens had found six men lying on the mesa. Only one of them was alive, and that was this officer. Instinctively the crowd of Easterners had realized that when this man waved a gun he meant something. And so the crowd had dispersed.

The wine from the store was driven up to the "wine factory." The enforcement officers, with drawn guns, entered.

"You're under arrest," they said to everybody in sight. "Help us bring this stuff in here."

And so, in time, the two stocks were joined.

I was in the room of the "sick" man, getting facts from him for this series of articles on the Prohibition question, when one of the agents came in to report. He was the one who had come from Oklahoma.

"Thirteen thousand gallons, sir," he said. "About one thousand gallons of it was in tanks and we didn't have any barrels to put it in. Barrels cost so much that I bought fifty gallons of kerosene and poured into it."

"Why didn't you run it into a sewer?" asked the "sick" man.

"There wasn't any sewer in the neighborhood, sir," said the local enforcement officer.

"All right!" said the "sick" man. "You've got them all under arrest and have all the evidence?"

"Yes, sir; everything," said the soft-voiced Oklahoman. "And I was mighty glad to do that job, too, sir. We've known about that place for months, but we couldn't get any orders to raid it. You see, the fellow that ran it is a relative of the chief of police and high up in politics."

"What's local politics got to do with the United States Government officials?" asked the "sick" man.

(Continued on page 114)



Into the sewer! Citizens of Zion City, Ill., watch the destruction of many gallons of beer seized by revenue agents.



Harry Sands, who makes a specialty of cleaning up big bootleggers.

What Happened to Marjorie Hale When Life Struck its First Cruel Blow

MARJORIE suddenly found herself fearfully afraid.

Her father, the dearest thing to her in the world, shot down in that woman's apartment! Why had he gone to Sybil Russell? Why had another woman's love become necessary to him?

But, after all, was he altogether to blame? Had her mother failed? And had she, Marjorie, failed?

She couldn't understand it all. Rinderfeld, the shady lawyer whom Gregg had retained to "cover up" the scandal before Stanway and her father's other business enemies turned it to their advantage, told her she was incapable of understanding.

"Leave that, like you leave other unpleasant items, to men like me," he had said.

Gregg understood; Billy didn't. Somehow he wasn't built so he could. Could she, after all this, marry Billy? Would it be fair to him?

Yesterday the world had been a pleasant, friendly place. Today it was strange and hostile, ready to destroy her.

Why?—it was no fault of hers.



THE BREATH

Illustrations by

Chapter VI

MARJORIE began dressing about half past nine in the morning. She had been out of bed and in many times during the hours since she undressed about three o'clock; at most of these times she had stirred purely from nervousness, but after dawn she had assigned herself errands such as gaining possession of the newspaper, as soon as Sarah had brought it in from the porch, and listening when Martin, the houseman, answered a telephone ring.

The newspaper printed not a word about Charles Hale nor a mention of the shooting on Clearedge Street nor anything about anyone named Russell. And the telephone brought no alarm. The big, warm, pleasant house was as quiet and secure-seeming as upon any other morning after her father had gone away and she and her mother were sleeping late.

It was a quiet morning outside and the bright, yellow sunlight, striking through the bare trees to the snow-covered roof of the porch, and shining upon the lawn, bore enough heat to dissolve the whiteness into wet, glistening patches; the sun brought the white and purple pigeons fluttering from a neighboring barn and set them to preening on the damp, steamy walk; and a flock of brown sparrows came, cheerily squabbling and chattering. When Marjorie again opened her door at the ringing of the telephone, she heard the snapping of a wood fire in the dining room of course. Her mother always liked a fire at breakfast in the winter. Everything was going on exactly as usual. And nothing was the same; nothing could ever be the same again.

Yesterday's world had been a friendly place, free from fears

and filled with pleasant neighbors preferring you happy and wishing you well; today, what a strange, hostile, threatening air hung over everything. Marjorie Hale, who had never known what it was to fear people, found herself afraid. If her friends knew what she knew, how they would tear her down and destroy her. They all might not want to; some of them might, consciously, attempt to help her. But no one, if he or if she found out, could really save her; in spite of themselves, they must join against the Hales and destroy her family.

This struck her, for long periods, utterly prostrate and nerveless with despair and ignominy; and then, contrarily, it spurred her to a nervous excitation in which she felt the presence of more power and will than she had ever before possessed and in which she determined to fight that annihilating peril alone. For she was so alone that, though everyone in every house about had become a pitiless menace to her, the greatest danger of all lay in her home. If her mother suspected, then everything which was left would instantly be gone. And Marjorie could not bear the thought of more destruction.

So she lay on her bed, shivering with dread, when she heard her mother moving about. Soon she heard her mother proceed downstairs and knowing that her mother would inquire for her, but would not send to disturb her, Marjorie remained in the refuge of her room and refrained from betraying that she was awake. The program, for this day, which she had accepted from Rinderfeld, spared her as much as possible from the ordeal of explanations. According to the arrangement, Dr. Grantham was to call about half past ten and detail to her mother the prepared story of last night. Presently the doctor's car appeared and he entered the house.



"Why did he do it, Doctor Grantham? Father! Why, oh, why did he?"

OF SCANDAL—by Edwin Balmer

James Montgomery Flagg

Marjorie crept to her door, opened it and listened quiveringly to the voices below; perhaps "something"—that euphony for death—had happened since early in the morning. No, the doctor had come only to repeat the narrative of his friend's long concealed ailment, the sudden discovery last evening that an immediate operation was necessary and the rest as Rinderfeld had composed it. Marjorie closed her door and went again to her window where she stood staring blankly out until she heard her mother on the stairs. The older woman opened Marjorie's door and entered, pale and with her large blue eyes looking darker than usual, as they did when she was anxious; but otherwise she was controlled and Marjorie was swept with miserable pride in her. For she knew that her mother had heard Dr. Grantham's hard story and without suspicion had accepted it.

"My poor child," she said with compassion and with her cold hands she clasped Marjorie's equally cold ones. "You had that to bear all alone last night. But you knew where I was, Marjorie—you knew I was with Mrs. Cleves."

"Yes, mother," Marjorie admitted, and she could not help breaking down a little. She was not afraid of her mother now. She was overswept with the degradation of what her father had done—for his falseness and deception. And yet she also was deceiving her mother.

"I realize you acted only to spare me, child. That is your father in you," her mother said with her arms about her and kissing her once. "I know he considered that he was sparing me by keeping that serious trouble hidden so long and then going off by himself to look death in the face. He always wishes to spare me, doesn't he, dear?"

"Yes, mother," Marjorie said again, wretchedly.

"He is quite, quite safe, Marjorie—Dr. Grantham assures me. Doctor will take me down to see him now. Of course I understand your father's motives for wishing to keep his operation secret even from his friends. I realize I must not let my own feelings stand in the way of his business future. Kiss me, Marjorie . . . There now, I'll go with Dr. Grantham. You mustn't think of going, child. You've been through too much already."

Marjorie was glad not to argue against her; she scarcely trusted herself to be with her mother yet. Her mother went to her own room and Dr. Grantham came up.

"How are we this morning?" he asked, in his cheery, impersonal voice. He was at the age of slow, imperceptible physical change, and except for his bearing, which was naturally more assured, and his clothes, which were better, he seemed to Marjorie exactly the same as she first remembered him, coming in and asking her that same question, in that same voice, every morning of those weeks when she had been in bed with scarlet fever when she was ten years old. That was when the Hales inhabited the seven-room clapboard house on the fifty-foot lot in Irving Park, and Marjorie's father took care of the furnace and Dr. Grantham had his office above the drug store on the Montrose Avenue corner. Of course, long ago, he too had moved away and he no longer "took" general practice cases of scarlet fever and measles. While he had been becoming a great surgeon, had he like his friend, her father, also become some one strange inside, Marjorie wondered? The question caused her to stand stiffly as he came up to her and slipped his deft, firm fingers to her pulse.

"You mustn't keep yourself going so, Marjorie," he reproved her kindly, releasing her wrist. "I suppose you haven't slept at all."

"No."

"You must sleep this morning. Your father is doing splendidly—there will be no trouble with your mother. You've been a champion, Marjorie. Now really try to go to sleep. If you don't succeed, drop one of these in a glass of water. Drink it." He took a couple of capsules from his vest pocket and laid them on her table, and he turned away but did not leave the room.

"Doctor!" Marjorie suddenly appealed.

He swung about to her, as though he had been waiting for what would follow.

"Why did he do it, Doctor Grantham? Father! Why, oh, why did he?"

Grantham shook his head. He intended, undoubtedly, to convey to her that he could not make it out, but he failed in this; he succeeded in showing her only that he would not discuss that with her.

"You can take both those capsules an hour apart, if you need two, Marjorie," he said kindly. "Don't try to figure out life in one day, girl. No brain can stand it. Take one of those and lie down and count sheep—don't think—relax. Then, if you need, take the other." He went away.

"Relax! Count sheep!" Marjorie repeated to herself with disdain, standing at the window and watching her mother precede Dr. Grantham to his car. Yet, when they disappeared, reaction, if not relaxation, set in. She undressed and went to bed so utterly gone that she slept as if she were drugged, though both of Dr. Grantham's capsules remained unopened on her table. It was after five when she awoke, and outside the sunlight was gone; her mother was sitting quietly beside her and, as soon as her head cleared and recollection came, Marjorie discerned that her mother was still unsuspecting. Nothing had occurred at the hospital or during her absence from the house to turn her mother's pure, idealistic thoughts into channels of doubt.

"I returned shortly after noon, dear," she said, smoothing Marjorie's forehead with her cool, steady hand. "Your father was comfortable and I have since telephoned and they tell me he is sleeping. So we have no cause to question his rapid recovery, dear. And Dr. Grantham assures me positively there can be no recurrence of the trouble."

Marjorie had supper brought to her room, but afterwards she dressed and, going downstairs, she discovered Billy, who took her in his arms.

"I told Sarah not to send my name up, but if you came down I meant to be with you," he said emotionally and kissed her.

"Don't—just now, Billy," she begged, but when he released her in compliance, she held to him for a moment. "I need you so much but I can't want to feel yet, don't you see?" she tried to explain.

He assured her that he did, but she realized, when she kept away from him, that she was hurting his feelings. How big and warm he was, and what a power of feelings he had packed in him! And she did not yet guess how much until he drew her into the seclusion of the little den beyond the drawing room, where he shut the door tight and then put his big, strong, blundering arms about her again.

"Dear Marjorie, will you marry me tomorrow?"

It was so far from any feeling she could imagine sharing that night that she cried out, "What?"

He repeated it, pressing her to him and explaining: "I won't expect you to begin being my wife tomorrow, Marjorie. But I want to feel you're mine, whatever happens."

That frightened her more.

"Why? Is father worse?"

Instantly he tried to reassure her. "Oh, no, dear! It's only the danger of scandal. If it comes, I want you to have my name."

She did not relax at that, as he seemed to expect. It made her tenser, stronger, and she worked with her fingers to loosen his upon her. "Thank you, Billy, but a name wouldn't change—disgrace." The idea of another name shielding her seemed so trivial that she could not think about it, but she realized that his offer meant much to him; and now he elaborated it.

"If you come to feel the need of my name or if I've anything else in the world that can help you, Marjorie, it's yours. Do you know, dear, how you're fixed for—money?"

"No, I haven't thought of it."

"If your father's sick a long time or if, for any reason, he doesn't return to his office, you must know that all I have is yours . . . I've fifty thousand dollars of stock in father's bank in my own

name, which I can get whenever I ask for it. Every cent of it is yours—ours, Marjorie—to see you through whatever's before us."

But she could not think of what he was saying. She could not continuously think even of him, though it was good to have him, good to know she could depend upon his big, honest, whole-souled love, good to feel the complete cleanliness of him in her world so suddenly soiled. Through his clasp by which he was attempting to comfort her, she became sensitive to some new danger which he was striving to deny and prevent affecting himself and her; and soon she wrung admission of it from him. Rinderfeld wished her to call at his office as early in the morning as possible.

"But there can be no need of your going yourself. I will go for you," Billy declared. "I'll make him tell me anything he has to say to you."

Through this, she perceived a controversy already passed between Billy and Rinderfeld, and she asked, "You saw him today?"

"Yes. He telephoned me to tell you to come and see him. He wouldn't tell me why over the 'phone. So I went to his office. And he wouldn't tell me any more."

"Why not, do you suppose?"

"Because I don't honestly believe he's anything more to tell. He said he wanted to have a talk with you. It was essential for him to have a private talk with you, were his exact words."

"Where is his office, Billy?"

"You aren't thinking of going there!"

"As early as I can tomorrow."

"I told you I'd go for you."

"You've been for me, Billy."

There was nothing for him but to give in at last. He demanded the right to accompany her, but this, too, she refused and so they quarreled; and both begged for forgiveness and they composed on the basis that Billy might meet her downtown and take her to Rinderfeld's door and wait for her afterwards.

VII

THE office door of Felix Rinderfeld, attorney at law, gleams in gold letters with his name, and estate, alone. It faces a long white hall which is on an upper floor of one of the newer office buildings on Clark Street, and upon opening the door and glancing ahead through the wide, specklessly clean window opposite, the visitor looks upon the gray, columned façade of the Cook County Courts block.

It is not the most delectable highway of downtown Chicago, Clark Street. Michigan Avenue, with the lakefront park to its east, is at once the Fifth Avenue, the Mall, the Avenue de l'Opera of Chicago—the boulevard of hotels and clubs, of jewelers and costumers, of hatters and bootmakers, of tea rooms and confectioners, of the Art Institute and Orchestra Hall. Marjorie Hale knew Michigan Avenue well from the Blackstone north. On Wabash Avenue, which lies next to the west, she knew, of course, McClurg's bookstore, Lyon and Healy's, Colby's and several other stores. On State Street she was familiar at least with the squares from Carson Pirie's to Marshall Field's. And even on Dearborn, which is mostly a man's street of commerce and contracts, she could identify a building or two. But she was almost a complete stranger to Clark Street in daytime when the theaters which occasionally drew her there at night were closed.

What chiefly caught her eye this morning, as Billy escorted her, were lurid film posters, pawnshops, and cutlery and shotgun and rifle displays. The huge, sooty colossus of the City Hall and County Building did not, in her mind, elevate the street. She had a feeling of being lowered as she sought Rinderfeld's number; she had never thought of herself as client of those who had business to do about the divorce courts.

But there was nothing second rate or deteriorating to self-respect in the air of Rinderfeld's office; quite the contrary. If he had ever luxuriated in the maroon ostentation of heavy mahogany for office furnishings, he had learned better and stepped higher to the repression of dull walnut of delicate Chippendale-like lines in chairs. The girl who sat at a small, Chippendale walnut desk near a door so obviously private that it needed no label was no usual office attendant. She was pretty, but repressed, pale without a patch of rouge. She was almost unlike in her black dress, high about the neck and, as Marjorie noticed when she arose, lower than usual in the skirt.

"You are?" she asked quietly and without any apparent personal curiosity.

"Miss Conway," Marjorie replied, using the name that Rinderfeld had assigned her for her communications with him.



Marjorie crept to her door, opened it and listened quivering to the voices below; perhaps "something"—that euphony for death—had happened since early morning.

"About ten minutes, I think," the girl said and resumed her seat. No distinguishable word came through the solid door, but there was the hum of a heavy voice. No one else was in the waiting room but in a few minutes a gray-haired, well-dressed, self-important man of about fifty-five entered brusquely, nodded to the attendant who nodded to him, and sat down rather suddenly in a chair opposite Marjorie, after picking up the copy of *Field* which he did not read but held up as a sort of screen over which to peer. While Marjorie was still wondering in what relation to scandal he was waiting upon Rinderfeld, a buzzer under the Chipendale desk sounded in the most demure of audible tones and

the black-gowned young lady arose and half opened the door beside her. After Marjorie passed in, the door closed silently but with firmness.

With equal firmness was closed a further door by which the gentleman of the deep, humming voice evidently had made his exit; for Rinderfeld was alone. He was on his feet on the other side of a flat, delicately legged table-desk which was at the middle of the large, soft, blue Chinese rug which carpeted the room. In the waiting room, the walls were of grass cloth hung with a couple of good etchings. Here on three walls were panels of the same hue of walnut as the desk and filing case and chairs; paneling

The Breath of Scandal

too was between the two windows on the west which, like that in the waiting room, gave a view of the County Courts. Possibly Rinderfeld did not quite appreciate the effect of overdoing elegant repression. Obviously some one must pay for all this; and for the first time Marjorie affrightedly speculated on the cost of Mr. Rinderfeld's retainer. For her glance at him upon entering had relieved her of her overnight terror that inevitable public scandal threatened her. Rinderfeld was reassurance and self-confidence themselves.

"Come, sit right here," he invited for greeting, bowing and turning the Chippendale chair at the left end of his table so that it faced his own more directly.

"Good morning, Mr. Rinderfeld," she replied nervously and sat down as he bid her.



Marjorie said yes; probably it was better to deny it but that it was true.

"It is very good of you to call here," he said, still standing before her and estimating her. "We might talk elsewhere, but here we are certain never to be disturbed."

It had been impossible for Marjorie to deliberate, on the night when he followed her to Fursten's, whether this man was personally contemptible or not. She had been altogether too dazed to think of him as a man possessing personal qualities other than the knowledge of how her father, her mother and she might be saved from the morass of infamy threatening to rise about them. She knew, of course, that Billy despised Rinderfeld and that Billy was awaiting her outside, rather with an idea of disinfecting her, when she emerged from this office, from the contamination of this man. But there was nothing about the lawyer's manner which seemed contaminating. He was affected, but with nothing worse than over-courtliness in his manner; certainly it was far better to err on that side than by over-familiarity with a girl placed in her relationship to him. A really coarse man might be expected to express himself by putting his hand upon her; but Rinderfeld had so wholly refrained from such contact that he had avoided even offering his hand when she entered.

She appreciated this in him; she appreciated, too, the perfect cleanliness and healthfulness of his appearance. He was a bit overdressed; in what respect, she could not see, for it was in no one respect. His blue serge suit was perhaps too perfectly tailored; his shirt too silky; his tie too perfectly arranged; his lack was no more than a saving touch of the casual. He seemed to realize that lack and to attempt to remedy it, as he sat down.

"I hope I have not worried you by asking the privilege of this talk."

"You mean nothing more has happened yesterday, Mr. Rinderfeld?"

"Nothing in the sense that happenings are strokes of fate completely beyond human control. But of course the regular sequence of events proceeds."

He said that calmly but it shortened her breath again after the temporary relief of first seeing him.

"What is the regular sequence of events, please?"

Rinderfeld leaned slightly toward her, resting his left arm on his desk; a dictation phonograph was too near him and he pushed it slightly farther off. "The people, who knew, are talking more, of course."

"What people who knew—of what, Mr. Rinderfeld?"

"Of the situation at the apartment on Clearedge Street prior to the—accident of the other night."

"Oh! Who knew of that?"

Rinderfeld smiled slightly; not an unpleasant smile and not suggesting amusement at her innocence or superiority over her. He was smiling to reassure her before she heard his next words.

"The other night, when I talked with you, I did not know how many might happen to be informed; possibly they might be very few, so I did not discuss the matter with you. Since then I have found that the usual number of neighbors and others seem to have fairly accurate information of events up to the shooting. They do not seem to know of that. They know something happened night before last but they have not yet learned what."

He smiled again in reassurance but Marjorie gasped and went weak. Rinderfeld straightened and waved his hand before him as though brushing away a fly.

"Think of them as flies, my dear young lady," he said. "Flies cause troubles, do they not? . . . Do they not?" he repeated and, as he evidently meant to force an answer, Marjorie nodded.

"Exactly," Rinderfeld agreed.

"Now where are they to be found in their season? Everywhere outdoors, is that not so?"

When again he waited, again Marjorie nodded.

"Now what do we do about them? Do we go out to exterminate them? No. We screen against them, knowing if we keep them out of our houses we are safe. Only if they come in are they capable of causing us trouble. That is the way with these fly humans who know what we might wish they do not. Keep them out and, no matter what they know or say, they can not harm you. It is as simple as that."

"Of course you understand," said Marjorie, "that is not quite clear to me."

Rinderfeld nodded. "I am going to ask you for a few moments to think accurately or, at least, to follow me while I assign to the different items of conduct and reputation the exact values which they possess—in distinction from the value which we like to pretend we hold them at. You read the papers, of course."

"Yes."

"You cannot have failed then to have become familiar with the fate of a certain prominent banker in New York City who, by the publication of scandal against him, found it advisable to resign a position which was one of the most important in the world. Now what, in your opinion, forced him out?"

"Why," said Marjorie, "what he did! When his associates learned that, they could not keep a man of his character in his position."

Rinderfeld nodded, not in agreement. He was telling her merely that she had said exactly what he expected her to say.

"His character had nothing to do with it. How many of his associates, do you suppose, were surprised and shocked by the morning papers? My dear young lady, let us think. What a veritable cloud of witnesses his wife produced against him, and the newspapers interviewed—servants, sailors, clerks, jewelers and what not. The number of people in every layer of society who suspected his character was extraordinary. You would have said, if you had known it, half would have been more than sufficient to ruin him but, until his wife brought charges against him in court, they were all harmless. They could whisper; undoubtedly they did. They could wag their heads. But they could not strike him."

"He could have snapped his fingers at them all—in fact, for several years he seemed to have been snapping his fingers at them—and he could have continued to do exactly as he pleased had he kept guard over the gate to court action against him, which was through accusation by his wife."

"That immediately turned his most private affairs into the most public of property. Perhaps you have been amazed, in reading in the papers of the scandal of other men's lives, how the newspapers so quickly gathered the facts which they publish. My dear young lady, in most cases, they have been known even to the newspapermen for months or years. But the newspapers were helpless to handle them until court action started by somebody made proper and publishable known facts which, before some one complained in court, would have been libel. Of course the publication in no way alters the man's character—merely his reputation; and it does not alter even his reputation with the people nearest him, who had known about it before. But now they discover they must cast him out, because everyone else knows too. It is not, you see, the unforgivable sin which destroys him but the no longer concealed

scandal. If it were the former, there would not be many—pardon me—you will say I am cynical instead of merely experienced. But now we may, perhaps, proceed to a more businesslike estimate of our immediate needs than might have been possible a few minutes ago."

He rose and crossing to a table upon which stood a silver carafe with a couple of goblets, he poured two glasses of water and returned with them on a small silver tray.

Marjorie gazed at them as though not recognizing what they were for. They were beautiful, extravagant goblets with silver applied to the glass; but the expensiveness did not impress her now and did not remind her of the probable extortion of Rinderfeld's fees. In her sickening fright, she could feel only dependence upon this man so assured and expert in her troubles. He spoke to her twice, urging her to drink, before she was able to refuse, whereupon he drained one glass and, resuming his seat, placed the other goblet on the desk near him.

"You may now see that it is relatively unimportant that twelve or fourteen neighbors of Mrs. Russell may be aware that all has not been regular with her and that they may have identified the man. For all practical purposes they are harmless."

Some of them undoubtedly feel sympathy for them both; some feel it is none of anyone else's affair; a few, unquestionably, are shocked. But very few people, without some motive of self-advantage, take the trouble of disciplining others. They merely take it out in talk. There is one chance—perhaps as large a chance

as one in a thousand—that some busybody from Clearedge Street might visit your home. I may say the chance exists only if there happens to be a neighbor who lives by the profession of morality. I mention this solely that when it may occur to you, you will disregard it.

"To discover who may be dangerous, we have merely to reckon who may consider himself benefited by ruining your father. As well as I have been able to calculate so far, there are only two. One is Russell. He tried blackmail which he rather injudiciously backed by a flourish with a revolver which he fired, I believe, in excitement and not intentionally. Undoubtedly now he is frightened. When your father recovers and returns to business, he may again be heard from—but not now unless in

connection with the man whom we have immediately to guard against, Stanway. Unquestionably you know Mr. E. H. Stanway."

Marjorie nodded. Her lips were very dry and she longed now for the water at Rinderfeld's elbow, but she would not ask for it. "I've known him all my life," she said. "He employed father, who started as his clerk, Mr. Rinderfeld."



After frankly relating what she had heard, Clara asked if the Hales wanted it denied.

JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAEG

"Exactly, and who now is Mr. Stanway's most dangerous rival—in fact, his only dangerous rival—for the presidency of the Tri-State Products and Materials Corporation. I have only had a day to go into details of their present organization, so I will be glad if you correct me in any misconception. Stanway has never been a real worker; he inherited from his father a stock interest which got him a sinecure position in a then unimportant department of the company. He happened to employ your father and his department began to grow till it was doing the biggest part of the business of the company. Stanway was a figurehead; but as he and his relatives held the controlling stock they kept him in office though, to keep your father, they had to pay him more than Stanway; then Stanway succeeded in transferring your father to another department and instantly Stanway's end began dropping and the new department jumped up.

"A few years ago, there was nothing to do but make your father general manager and again greatly increase his salary. To satisfy Stanway, they raised him to vice-president but did not increase his pay. As general manager, your father has made a remarkable record, not only during the boom of the war, but since. I am told that Tri-State Products and Materials actually employs more men today than last year; their output has increased and they have not missed a dividend. Nominally, this has happened under the administration of Dorsett, the president, but his health has been bad for years. His contribution has been chiefly in promoting and backing your father against the Stanway family interest and keeping a free hand for him. Stanway, as vice-president and therefore nominally a superior to your father, has so far succeeded in saving his face. When Dorsett dies—as he is likely to do any day I understand—the show-down must come. Your father, I understand, will not remain if Stanway is made president."

"No," said Marjorie. "I've heard him say so. Half a dozen other big companies have been after father, Mr. Rinderfeld."

Rinderfeld nodded. "And if your father is made president, Stanway will not stay?" He made that a question.

"Father himself has said he didn't see how Mr. Stanway can. He's referred to father, even in these last years, as 'my clerk' at every possible chance."

"So I have heard. Now these are no times for a company, which is still taking on men and paying dividends, to indulge in family affections when electing a president for a ten million dollar corporation. Stanway knows that his own cousins—or enough of them to make a majority of stock with the other crowd—will vote your father in when Dorsett dies or resigns, unless he can make it impossible. This accident the other night must have seemed to him made for his hand."

Marjorie jerked quickly. Through the blur of her brain, attempting to receive and arrange so many amazing ideas so rapidly, suddenly she perceived at what Rinderfeld was aiming.

"You mean, Mr. Rinderfeld," she said, reaching her hand forward to his desk, "that Mr. Stanway knows of—that?"

"Knows?" said Rinderfeld judicially. "He has known about 4689 Clearedge Street, I am quite sure, for some time. Possibly he has been waiting for some such accident as has happened; possibly—" Rinderfeld stopped abruptly and more eloquently than by any words he could have said he suggested that which flashed into Marjorie's mind. He seemed to see, by watching her, that he need not say it.

"You mean, Mr. Rinderfeld," she repeated again her address of him, "that Mr. Stanway caused that?"

Rinderfeld turned and picked up the second goblet from his desk and sipped the water sparingly.

"Causation, my dear young lady," he said, clinging to his abstinence from even once repeating her name or her father's, "is always difficult to prove. If you ask me whether I think that Mr. E. H. Stanway's desire to insure his own election to the presidency of the Tri-State Products and Materials Corporation and the sudden and as yet unexplained recrudescence of interest of Russell in his former wife, whom he deserted and who divorced him, are purely coincidental as to time, I would reply to you that, in my opinion—as yet unsustained by material evidence—they are not."

Marjorie's fingers clenched tight on the edge of Rinderfeld's desk; she was hot now, tense and eager to fight. She forgot entirely for the moment her father's contribution of guilt toward his own undoing. Stanway, his enemy—and hers—had planned it, or at least, planned to profit by it. For the moment she was stirred against Rinderfeld and almost angry at him for being able himself when so rousing her, to keep so cool. And Rinderfeld realized this, as he seemed, after a moment's reflection, to realize everything.

"To you, it is of course terrible," he said, putting down the goblet carefully on his silver tray. "To me—in what state would I keep myself if I allowed myself to be torn up about such things? But do not imagine too much. Our friend undoubtedly fell far short of expectation of the shooting. There was to be a scene, undoubtedly—that should have been all; that should have been enough. Now, though what has happened has unquestionably exceeded expectations in certain respects, in others it has brought about embarrassments. Russell is not at hand; the rôle of the accuser is therefore vacant. It is never an over-agreeable rôle. The law may have commanded that the sinner be stoned, but when it was suggested that he who was without sin cast the first stone, the crowd melted away, you may remember. Stanway will do nothing openly or directly, however much he knows. He will call, I feel quite sure, upon your mother."

Marjorie stood up because she could sit still no longer. "Now I know why you sent for me."

Rinderfeld glanced up at her and inclined his head slightly. "Obviously I cannot prevent that call. As obviously I cannot be at your home to meet him when he comes. You can and you can render him harmless simply and easily, if you will."

"How can I?"

"He will arrive with the idea that he is the bearer of news. You will meet him and when he starts to hem and haw over his story take it up for him and finish it—and him." Rinderfeld suddenly indulged himself in a laugh. "I would like to see him when he finds that he has no news. When he finds that you know, he will not imagine anything but that your mother must also know—and that she is complacent. Then, what can he do?"

Marjorie stared and, in a moment, nodded and Rinderfeld arose. "He has one more barrel to fire," he confessed, "but leave the pulling of that charge to me. If I prove mistaken in the expectations I have given you—or if anything else out of the ordinary occurs—communicate with me at once. We understand each other, I am sure, perfectly."

Marjorie nodded again. She recognized that he wished to end their interview but whereas, before entering this room, she could not have dreamt of wishing to prolong her talk with Rinderfeld, now she would stay. Not because she failed to understand or because she was curious as to what was the other charge of Mr. Stanway's which Rinderfeld planned to pull. She had thought all she could about the threat of Stanway; suddenly it had sunk to secondary importance and what overwhelmed her was that which had caused her to cry to Dr. Grantham yesterday morning. Why had her father done what he did?

Dr. Grantham had avoided answering her. If he himself understood, he would not tell. And now Marjorie doubted the fullness of the doctor's comprehension. She had not even put the question to Billy, and now she thoroughly realized why she had not; for Billy, though a man, was almost as unequipped with experience in such affairs as she. But here was a man with experience beyond any other whom she might meet and who, where he might have been personal and unpleasant, had preserved perfectly the professional throughout this difficult conversation with her. As she thought back upon it, she was amazed at how he had got through it without personal offensiveness and yet imparted to her what he had; she felt she could ask him anything and he could keep it impersonal; and she felt that, when he answered, he could tell her the truth.

"Mr. Rinderfeld!" she said with a sudden appeal, but then stopped.

Rinderfeld glanced at her and waited, and, when she did not proceed, he said: "Why did he do it? That is what you want to ask, I know."

"Not Mr. Stanway, Mr. Rinderfeld. I mean—"

"I know whom you mean," Rinderfeld finished for her. "That is what every woman, who comes here for the first time, wishes to know. Wives they are, usually. I used to try to answer that question; now, I know it is useless. A person who has to ask it admits that she is incapable of understanding the answer. I am very sorry, but I am sure that it is so."

"Why can I not understand? It's not enough to tell me it is because I have to ask that question."

Rinderfeld evidently was not accustomed to so vigorous a rebuttal and, as evidently, he liked it. "No," he said. "You're right; it's not. Though I can't attempt to tell you the other, I can tell you—if you wish—why, in my opinion, you are incapable of understanding. Undoubtedly you consider yourself at least acquainted with men. Undoubtedly when you have spoken of your friends, you have said that many of your closest were men and you considered yourself upon (Continued on page 122)

Nine O'Clock Tomorrow!

Illustrations by T. D. Skidmore

A brilliant pastel

by
ARNOLD BENNETT

—the famous English author whose "Sacred and Profane Love," "The Pretty Lady," and other novels are known to all lovers of good literature.

JAMES DEVRA descended from his car at the entrance to the club. The same adjective applied to himself as to the car—he was perfectly appointed. A dark and handsome Jew, with riches increasing every month, he had the face of a kind, capable, clear thinking, orderly, masterful, and successful man of about forty. In the Jewish community he was much respected for strict orthodoxy, broad generosity and artistic taste. His pride of race was intense. Charitable in estimating mankind, he excepted only one type of individual from his benevolence; he had nothing but scorn—a scorn fierce, cold and taciturn—for the renegade Jew.

"Nine forty-five," he said to the chauffeur. He said it with a friendly, reliant smile, as one human being to another. But in the firm features and gaze there was somehow the warning implication that he did not mean nine forty-six.

He crossed the pavement of Pall Mall, walked up the noble and massive steps of the club, glanced at the engaged hall porter, who by a sign indicated that there were no letters for him, hung his hat in the cloak room, passed into the lavatory to wash, and then through the great dim tessellated and pillared hall to the coffee room—as the restaurant of the club was still called. The long apartment, severe, beautiful, magnificent, disfigured only by bad portraits of statesmen, had just been lighted for the evening. It had tables for a hundred and fifty, and at lunch nearly every chair was occupied; but now there were fewer diners than stewards, cashiers, waiters, waitresses and page-girls. Devra with an inquiring eye sought among the infrequent guests for an acquaintance whose company might attract him, found none, sat down solitary at a table for four, and ordered some food and half a bottle of champagne from an old congenial steward, who devolved part of the command to a pale and high-heeled waitress.

"Rather dark here, Corser. I shan't be able to see my plate for my shadow," said Devra cheerfully.

"Yes, sir," the old steward replied, and his manner showed that he had the deep sentiment of Pall Mall in his bones. "They have talked of putting in extra chandeliers, but it seems it wouldn't suit the architecture."

"We must resign ourselves, I suppose. You might bring me 'The Westminster Gazette,' will you?"

"Certainly, sir."

Corser went off to get the wine and the paper.

The diners, chiefly old, dull, and preoccupied, had the air of dining at the club because they could dine nowhere else, an air neglected, desolate, and gloomy. They did not in fact dine; they solemnly nourished themselves. And the attendants, prisoners of the club, seemed to partake of the desolation of the diners.

Devra lodged "The Westminster Gazette" in front of the cruet, but to read it was too much trouble. He preferred to savor the vast despondency of the room. Not that he shared it. No! His own cheerfulness quite uninfected, he merely commiserated the diners and with benign urbanity disdained them. Nor did he object to dining alone. Being a man of very

varied interests, sentimental and otherwise, he was accustomed to evenings over-full, and occasional solitude made a piquant change for him.

Raphael Field, R. A., came vaguely in: a tall, stout, stooping, slouching old man with white hair and a boyish look on his rather rugged, red, carelessly shaven face, and pale hands whose joints were much enlarged. He wore shabby but well-cut tweeds, clumsy black boots, a low collar, and a little black tie of the last insignificance. Raphael Field's career had been a series of triumphs, not the least of which was the triumph over his fond father, an excessively bad mid-Victorian painter who had baptized his offspring with that absurd Christian name and insisted that he must and would be a great artist. That anyone so handicapped should—especially after having commenced as an author—become the most distinguished and successful painter of his epoch, redeeming his Christian name from its absurdity,

and reluctantly joining the Academy late in life in order to oblige the Academy and to give luster to that poor old body—this was miraculously against all the chances and an astounding demonstration of the man's native force. Raphael Field would have been a first rate lion at any West End party, and the chief lion at most. But in the club, which was a club of celebrities, rich men, high officials, expensive professionals, prominent statesmen, he was just an individual like the rest of the members. Indeed, he had a naïve, semi-apologetic demeanor, as though acknowledging that the renown of a painter, however wealthy and successful, could not truly be as authentic and imposing as that of a millionaire, a specialist doctor, a gladiator of the bar, or a transient Cabinet minister. He was wandering at large, rather like an ox on a highroad, past Devra's table when Devra stopped him.

"Good evening, Mr. Field," said Devra, with his well-known bright smile, and the respect due to genius and to a man not far off thirty years older than himself.

The sound of his name seemed to recall Raphael Field from another world. He marshaled his strayed faculties, in the manner of the old, and stooped hugely over Devra and the table.

"Ah! Mr. Devra!" His faint answering smile showed the ruined, irregular teeth.

"Have you forgiven me for out-bidding you for that Queen Anne table at Christie's?"

Raphael Field suddenly beamed.

"Ah!" he said in his rich, deep voice, the voice of a strong, vital energy that was not yet quite spent. "Ah! You city men always get what you want. We others are content with your leavings."

"Now, now, Mr. Field," Devra protested flatteringly. "That's irony. It's common knowledge you've got one of the finest collections in London. And, d'you know, I've been ashamed of myself ever since last Thursday. I'll be delighted to send you round that table at the price of your last bid. I was carried away—with your experience as a collector you must know the feeling—and I forgot myself. Otherwise I shouldn't have dreamed of bidding against you. Let me send you the table. I should feel privileged."

"But this is exceedingly generous of you," said Field simply and sincerely. "I don't know that I shouldn't take you at your word—I'm an awful brigand—only that yesterday I happened to pick up an even more interesting table than the one you carried off under my guns—popguns, shall we say?"

"I'm so glad," Devra put genuine relief into his tone. "You've lifted a weight off my conscience... I expect you're dining with some one or I'd ask you to sit here."

"May I?" murmured the eternal boy.

Devra quickly cast "The Westminster Gazette" on to the floor. "I shall be honored," he said earnestly.

And he meant it. Geniuses are rare. He had only a slight acquaintance with Raphael Field and was eager enough to strengthen it. After all, his own title to distinction was slender. True, he had a house in Cavendish Square, and there were ten gardeners on his place in Oxfordshire; and he enjoyed great consideration in the city and in restaurants and in auction rooms;

and he knew a thing or two about all the arts, which is more than could be said of most artists! But Field was the unique Raphael Field. Field would receive an obituary notice of at least two columns in "The Times"—yea, and in the New York and Chicago papers also—and his biography when it came to be written would run to a couple of volumes and perhaps eight hundred pages.

They talked about the menu and after a colloquy with Corser, Field blew out breath.

"That's done," he said, eased.

And then he said:

"This room's very dull and dark at night, don't you think?"

"I agree," Devra responded with a grimmish smile. "I usually lunch here. It's quite different then. I'm surprised to find it is so empty. It's nearly as empty as the library."

"Do you dine here often?" he asked.

"Every night—nearly," said Field.

"Really! I'm never here at night, myself. Mr. Field, if it won't bore you, I wish you'd tell me something about picture prices. I'm very ignorant. I've often wanted to pick your brains, but I never hoped to get the chance."

And he skilfully led the old man into the enchanting domain of prices, especially the history of the prices of Field's own early pictures. And he made Field feel glorious, and so doing, realized with elation that he was once more casting the spell of his personal charm over a fellow creature. Nevertheless, while he listened, interested, and talked interestingly, he was saying in his heart: "If I hadn't asked the old fellow to sit here he'd have been dining by himself. And he dines here every night—generally by himself, I bet. What a life!"

The evening despondency of the big room at last infected him. He was filled with painful compassion for the distinguished celebrity, Raphael Field. More, he was filled with compassion for the whole human race, of which so few members had any sound comprehension of the great art of life as he understood it.

Just then he detected the waitress delivering a comic naughty grimace to the impassible Corser. This shocking and delightful phenomenon modified his mood of pity for all mankind. He hated waste. At the end of the dinner Raphael sighed and announced that he was going home.

"I'm going, too," said Devra, on a sudden impulse.

"Which way do you go?"

"Cavendish Square."

"I'm on your route then."

"If I might walk with you,"

Devra suggested respectfully.

"I walk so damned slowly."

"I'm not a runner myself."

Field's eye gleamed. The friendship was growing.

Field said deliberately:

"Would you care to look in at my place? I'd show you some bits of Queen Anne."

"Mr. Field, you're too kind. It's an unexpected pleasure, and I jump at it," said Devra with eagerness.

A renewed realization of the fact that he possessed a most singular power of captivating people began to mingle with an exciting sense of anticipation. He had an earnest desire to probe more deeply into Field's existence, and he was about to gratify it. Perhaps it was a morbid desire, but there it was—and he was an amateur of human nature! As they left the club he murmured discreetly to the hall porter: "When my car comes just tell the chauffeur I shan't want him any more tonight, will you? Thanks."



"Ah! You city men always get what you want."

F.D.S.



"Mr. Field, you've been very, very good to me. It's only right that you should know my name."

II

RAPHAEL FIELD wore a curious short cape, thrown lightly on his shoulders in the cool summer evening. This cape, flowing out under his rather long disheveled white hair, added to the pathos of his appearance as he anxiously undertook the feat of threading himself between the taxicabs in the dark dusk of Pall Mall. Devra thought with pain: "And if I were not with him the old gentleman would be crossing Pall Mall alone." When they reached Orange Square, the whole of which had been built at the end of the seventeenth century, Field drew out a bunch of

keys and turned into a side street. Although his address was Orange Square, his front door was in the side street. He spent half a minute in selecting his latchkey and another half minute in getting the door open. Then he stumbled up two steps and, groaned slightly, switched on the electric light in the staircase, and Devra had a glimpse of pictures rising in slopes above him. They were obviously fine pictures, but the stair carpet lacked distinction.

"We'll take the lift," said Raphael Field, banging the front door. "It's my exclusive property, but I never use it at night for fear it should jam half-way and I shouldn't be able to make

my people hear. However, as you're with me . . . It never does jam, you know, but it might." He laughed uneasily.

They took the lift, which Field manipulated. It barely held the two of them. When they emerged from it in safety, Field seemed surprised and Devra had a feeling of relief.

"Shall we go into the studio?"

But when Field pulled the switch down no light resulted in the studio.

"That fuse must have gone again," said he. "Let's try the drawing room."

In the drawing room he rang the bell. Devra heard the sound of it in the distance above.

No answer.

"Hm!" grunted Field, and rang again.

No answer.

"Hm!" grunted Field, and went out to the corridor and called:

"Higginbottom."

No answer.

He returned to the drawing room.

"In bed and asleep, I suppose," he said. "I keep a man and his wife here. But I suppose one can't expect servants to work more than fourteen hours a day seven days a week." He laughed uneasily once more. "Oh! Here are the drinks! He's put them in the other corner tonight."

"You've lived here for about forty years, haven't you, Mr. Field?" said Devra. "At least, so it's generally understood. How central you are!" he added flatteringly. "Equidistant from Regent Street, Bond Street, Piccadilly and Oxford Street. It puts Cavendish Square quite in the suburbs."

"Oh, no, no!" answered Field. "Funny how that story got about of me living here for forty years! It's true I first had the place forty years ago, but I gave it up after seven or eight years. I had the whole house then. There were no business houses in Orange Square then. Now nearly every house is wholly or partly let for business purposes. The two floors under us are occupied by a very fashionable dress-maker. She is a limited company, and she has the main entrance and the main staircase. I use now what used to be the servants' entrance and staircase in my time. Yes, I gave up the place. Couldn't stand it somehow. When I came back to England after living in Paris about ten years ago, I heard that the upper floors were to let, and so I took them. Thought I might as well. As you say, it's very central. What'll you have?"

"A little soda-water, if I may . . . Can't keep my eyes off your pictures, Mr. Field. You'll excuse me if I look round."

"She was enraptured with it. But it was far from finished. She said, 'I can come again tomorrow.'"

"Do, my dear fellow. Do! Most of 'em were given to me by the painters. I've got some furniture here, as you see; but very little. The fact is most of my furniture's stored in Paris. I couldn't be bothered to bring it over."

They examined a magnificent picture by Cezanne together. "It's one of the three or four very finest I've seen," said Devra earnestly.

Instead of replying Raphael Field opened a little drawer, and pulled out a duster, and delicately dusted the frame.

"I keep my own private duster in every room," said he, with his uneasy laugh.

They passed from room to empty room, all the walls lined with pictures. Field in a rather childish way returned to the studio





door and tried the ineffectual switch again; and Devra vaguely made out a large, bare interior, with the statue of a woman that in the gloom resembled a living woman so startlingly as to cause his flesh to creep for an instant.

"Do you paint every day?"

"Most days. Some days I can't be bothered, and I just sit about or go to the National Gallery."

Field displayed the whole floor, even to the bathroom.

"Fairly spacious, considering its situation, isn't it?"

"It is, indeed."

"Hm!"

Devra had offered appropriate remarks in front of the principal pictures. But in fact he was not thinking about the pictures at all. The existence of Raphael Field preoccupied him and desolated him. He saw the old man in his queer cape walking home solitary every night from his solitary dinner, and fumbling with his bunch of keys and fumbling at the keyhole, and puffing up the stairs (the servants' stairs) on his antique legs because he was afraid of the lift, and ringing vainly for servants, and sitting silent and lonely now in this room, now in that, and probably fumbling with the old-fashioned geyser in the bathroom with the linoleum floor, and finally undressing alone and getting into bed and lying awake alone.

But the most heartrending thing of all was the private duster kept in every room to remedy the negligence of servants. Devra was waited on hand and foot by servants in Cavendish

Square. If Devra came home at 3 A. M. and rang a bell that was unanswered he would have thought the day of judgment was at hand. As for switches that wouldn't work, as for geysers, as for linoleum in a bathroom, as for private dusters hidden in drawers—his imagination simply refused to conceive the phenomena in connection with his own existence.

Here was Raphael Field, world renowned, his name familiar and sacred to the lips of every connoisseur throughout Christendom! What had he got out of life? The pathos of him was tragic, shattering.

They wandered back through the emptiness of the flat, with the mystery of the servants' rooms above them, and the mystery of the dressmaker's ateliers below them, to the drawing room.

"Oh! Here's that Queen Anne table I was telling you of," said the old man. "Pretty good, isn't it?"

"Very interesting! Very interesting!" said Devra responsively, after he had inspected the piece with polite thoroughness. But he did not really think that it was very interesting. It was, indeed, indisputably second rate, and he wondered that the old man should have been deceived by it. Still, he went on praising it quite convincingly, for he could never resist the temptation to be agreeable.

"Curious thing," said Field. "Very curious thing! I picked that up in Mortimer Street on Monday for less than I gave for it in the eighteen eighties!"

"Then it belonged to you before?" Devra's tone was positively eager.

"It did. And there's a very curious incident connected with it."

"May I hear it?" Or is it a secret?"

"It would bore you."

"Mr. Field! Mr. Field!" Devra's dark eyes glinted a discreet flattery.

"It used to be a secret. But the thing happened so long ago it needn't be a secret any more. I wrote it all down at the time. Did you know I once had literary ambitions?"

"Ambitions, Mr. Field! Did I know? I have all your three books in my library."

The old man flushed with satisfaction, and his face was more boyish, more naive, than ever.

"Like me to read it to you?"

"I shall insist, Mr. Field."

Slowly and clumsily the old man produced his keys, unlocked a bookcase, adjusted his eyeglasses anew, and chose a calf-bound book from the shelves.

"The first volume of a journal that I used to keep—for practice," said he, and sat down under a light and turned pages backwards and forwards, breathing rather heavily.

"Here it is. I was looking at it on Monday night. It's very *sejune*, I'm afraid. Perhaps I ought to explain . . . No! Let's let it explain itself. I'll only say that at the time I wrote it I had almost given up my literary ambitions."

This is what he read in his rich, deep voice:

III

"FRIDAY morning I was in my beautiful new old house all by myself, just finishing my packing, ready to go away for the weekend to Harry's. There was a terrible state of dirt and mess, because the workmen weren't finally leaving until next day. The front-door bell rang. At first I thought I'd let it ring; but it rang several times. The ringing of the bell made the house seem very large and empty and me very lonely in it. My charwoman had gone. I wouldn't let her stay in the house after me. At last I went downstairs. The front door was locked and the key was gone. The workmen had taken it away, by arrangement. I was supposed to be using the servants' entrance. So I had to go out into the street by the side door and round the corner to the front door. A girl was standing in the portico. She was dressed in black. I had made a movement as if to raise my hat, before I remembered that I wasn't wearing a hat. I asked her what she wanted, and she said she wanted to see Mr. Raphael

Field. Then she said, 'You're Mr. Field, aren't you?' I explained how I was situated and brought her round to the side entrance, and upstairs to the second floor, nothing else being even half habitable—no carpets down, naturally."

"It was to this room I brought her," Field interjected.)

"There were two kitchen chairs, my easel, dais, and so on, a floor-sweeper, and the Queen Anne table I'd found a fortnight ago; that was all, except some planks and trestles that the workmen hadn't removed. She was extremely nervous, and I was rather nervous too. She said she wanted me to paint her portrait, at once—she was leaving England the next day. Just a sketch portrait. She had come to me because I had painted a portrait of a friend of hers, and she wanted the portrait of herself to give to the mother of that friend. What friend? She preferred not to say, and hoped I would excuse her.

"I told her that I was just going out of London—should be gone in half an hour—had a train to catch. But some other day I'd be delighted. She didn't speak, and I perceived she couldn't speak. The tears were falling from her eyes. I was considerably upset. In fact I had the most extraordinary sensations. There I was alone in the big house with her! I felt very sad and depressed. I'm a successful man, but I wondered whether I should continue to be successful, and whether I could afford the big house and the servants I'd engaged, and pay the rent and everything. I felt very solitary in the world. It was very curious how I felt. All at once, and without quite intending to do so, I told her I'd go out and send a telegram to say that I couldn't leave London until tomorrow, and I'd do her a sketch portrait immediately. She didn't protest. No! She just looked at me, quietly crying. It was a rather wild thing for me to do, and I shouldn't have done it, only she was a most beautiful young girl, with very fair hair, and dressed in half-mourning, which suited her. I knew nothing whatever about her except that she was a most beautiful young girl with fair hair. I had very little desire to know anything else about her. I ran off. I was kept a long time at the Regent Street Post Office telegraphing to Harry.

"When I returned she was sweeping the floor. Indeed, she'd practically swept it. Her bonnet was hung on the back of a chair. I was thrilled; couldn't utter a word. I had a prickly feeling all over my skin. She smiled. I told her I'd paint her in her bonnet, and I put a chair on the dais and asked her to take a pose.

"While I was fixing the easel and arranging my palette, she looked silently out of the window. Suddenly she said: 'How much will the portrait be?' I said that didn't matter, and we'd talk about that afterwards. The things one does usually say. But she insisted that the price must be fixed before I began. So I told her to fix it. She said she could pay fifty pounds. I agreed. If she'd said five I should have agreed. She took the money in notes out of her purse. She said: 'You don't know anything about me, and I prefer to pay in advance.' I objected. The argument ended by her leaving the dais and placing the notes on the mantelpiece.

"After I'd been painting about three-quarters of an hour I decided that the portrait should be more than a sketch and that I should paint all day. But between twelve and one I began to feel terribly hungry. I never felt so hungry before. I suggested to her that we should go out and have lunch at Verrey's. She told me to go, but she declined to go herself. She said she wasn't hungry and couldn't eat. Then I said that I wasn't hungry and that I wouldn't go either. I said I'd see whether there were any leavings in the kitchen. I went upstairs to the kitchen. The fire in the range wasn't quite out. The charwoman's apron hung on the knob of a cupboard door. I searched about and discovered three eggs and then half a loaf. I was startled by a noise behind me. It was she. She said: 'If there's anything, let me cook it for you!' I pointed to what I'd found. She put on the charwoman's apron, made up the fire, looked into all the cupboards, found some tea, washed a saucepan. Her movements were simply exquisite. I think that these were the most marvelous moments I had ever lived. She was young and extremely beautiful, with fair hair. She was an absolute mystery. I thought what a fool I should have been if I hadn't sent the telegram to Harry. It made me almost sick to think what I should have missed if I hadn't stayed.

"When the meal was ready, she put everything on a tray, and I carried the tray downstairs, and we had lunch opposite to each other at the Queen Anne table."

"This table," Field interjected, pointing.)

"A kind of intimacy developed. But we only talked about painting. She evidently knew something about painting. She

didn't really know, but she had that charming superficial knowledge that women acquire of things. She must have had acquaintances among painters. I had been working about an hour after lunch when the light failed very quickly. It was impossible to continue. We heard thunder. Then came a proper heavy thunderstorm. The darkness was such that we could plainly see the lightning. She turned pale. The regular traffic of the Square ceased. Only occasionally a horse trotted by. We looked out of the window. The rain rebounded from the pavements, which were deserted. A few people were sheltering in porticoes. Charles James Fox in his tight coat of granite glittered with wet. And the beautiful mysterious young girl with fair hair and I were safely under cover in the big empty unfurnished house.

"We thought the rain would cease, but it didn't. It settled into an obstinate downpour. There was no hope of continuing the portrait. The church clock boomed. I moved the easel to the window so that we could examine it. She was enraptured with it. I also was satisfied. But it was far from finished. She said, 'I can come again tomorrow.' I reminded her that she was leaving England tomorrow. 'Yes, but only in the afternoon. Supposing I came very early.' Thus we arranged for a final sitting. Then the rain ceased. Dusk, however, had now begun to fall. When we looked back from the window into the room shadows were gathering in the corners.

"She put on her mantle and her gloves and picked up her reticule. She would go. She would not let me find a four-wheeler for her. She said she must take an omnibus. I followed her down the stairs. On the first floor landing she stopped and I stopped. She said: 'Mr. Field, you've been very, very good to me and I've not thanked you at all. You haven't even asked anything about me. It's only right that you should know my name.' She opened her reticule. And then she melted into tears. She was so extremely beautiful and so benign, and so movingly sad, and so seductive and so enigmatic, and I was so close to her, that I kissed her. She did not resent the kiss, but she gave a little sob. Her mouth was wet and cool. My feelings could not possibly be described. A piece of paper was pushed into my hand. She murmured, 'Nine o'clock tomorrow.' She ran down the remaining stairs. The door banged."

IV

THE old man's rich voice ceased; he shut the book, and turned to replace it in the bookcase. With his back to Devra he said, in a self-conscious, excusing tone:

"I was under thirty then."

"And what happened next?" Devra cautiously asked.

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Nothing. She never came. The first hours of the following day were the most joyously exciting I ever spent. But she never came. The last hours of the day were the most terrible I ever spent." Raphael Field gave one of his short nervous laughs.

"But you had her address."

"I couldn't find the paper. Neither that night nor the next day. Looked everywhere. Thought I'd stuffed it into my pocket. Cut open the lining of my jacket. Couldn't find it. Only a very small paper. Never did find it."

"But hadn't you even looked at the paper?"

"No. You see at first I just sat down and—er—thought about her. I didn't worry about her name at first."

"And you never had the least idea who she was?"

Field hesitated before replying.

"You remember the Ollinson case?"

"No."

"You wouldn't. Before your time. Ollinson was a painter, pretty good in his day. I painted his portrait. He killed himself in his studio in Chelsea. That would be in the autumn of 1879 about. He was always queer. And usually mixed up with women. There was a rumor that he was violently in love—he was violent in everything, but this was said to be more violent than usual—and the girl wouldn't look at him. Well, it occurred to me that the girl who came to me that night might be the girl who wouldn't look at Ollinson."

"I see," Devra said. "She said you'd painted a portrait of a friend of hers and she wanted her own portrait for his mother. Perhaps the mother had a sort of morbid interest in the girl that her son had killed himself for—"

"Just so. The mother and she might have been friendly. Sorrow drawing 'em together and so on. Because naturally Ollinson's suicide must have upset the (Concluded on page 104)



LOUISE FAZENDA has forsaken comedies to appear in the Cosmopolitan Production, "The Beauty Shop." And, surprisingly, she can look beautiful instead of eccentric—because she is.

PHOTOGRAPH BY W. F. KELLY



GLADYS LESLIE is playing the part of Cherry in "Sisters," the Cosmopolitan Production of Kathleen Norris's famous novel of that name.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED CHERBY JERSEY



HELLEN MACKELLAR
is a stellar reason for
the success of "Back Pay."
PHOTOGRAPHED BY CAMPBELL STEVENSON 51

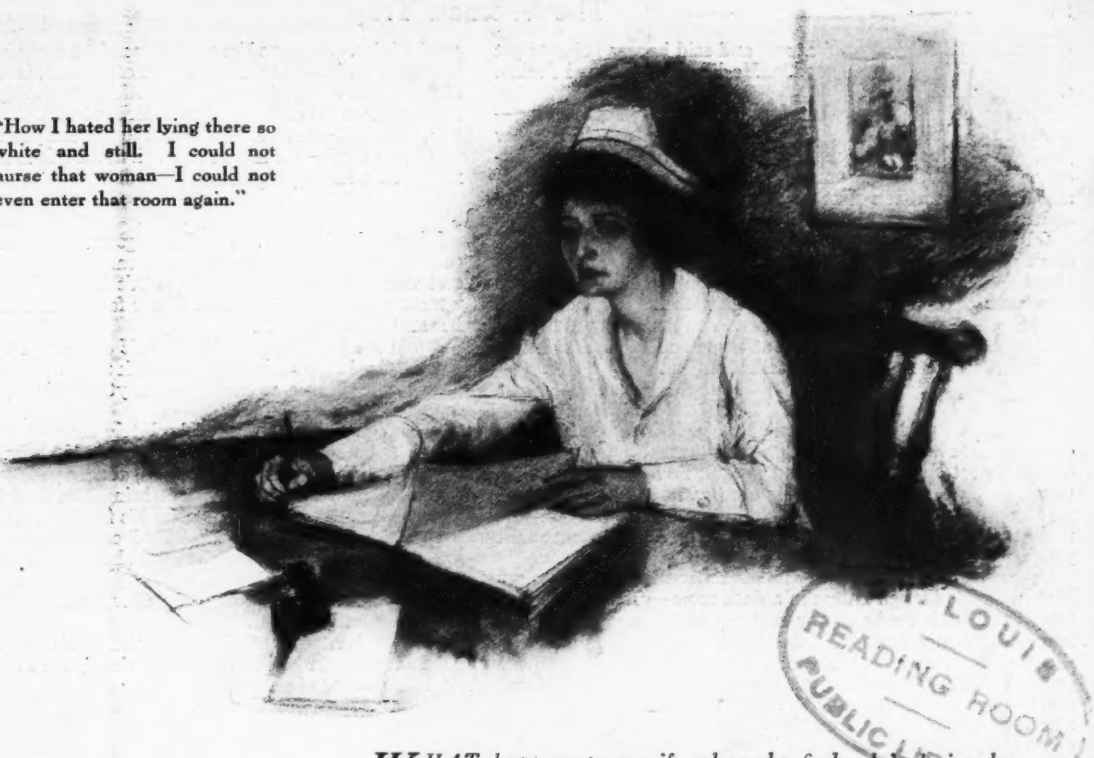


FLORENCE O'DENISHAWN of the Ziegfeld Folies has the flaming hair of a Botticelli angel and a grace beyond all description.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRI LARUE

"How I hated her lying there so white and still. I could not nurse that woman—I could not even enter that room again."



The WOMAN TRAP

By FREDERICK ARNOLD KUMMER
Author of "The Woman Who Ate Up a Man," "The Other Wife," etc.

WHAT happens to a wife when she finds she's losing her husband? How does she feel towards the "other woman" who's stealing him? What are her emotions? And her tactics?

THE woman in the nurse's uniform sat for a long time, her head resting on her outstretched arms. Beneath them lay a book in which she had been writing. Presently she raised her head and once more began to read the hastily penned lines. Her eyes were like gray, frozen pools.

Illustrations by
Grant T. Reynard

The woman laid the book aside, and drawing a sheet of paper to her, began to write. For many minutes no sound stirred the silence of the room except the hurried scratching of her pen.

Monday
 Dr. Garvin has asked me to marry him. I love him, and yet, I refused. I gave him no reasons. How could I tell him that I am a divorced woman—that my husband secured the divorce? I shall have to go away.

Wednesday
 All the past has come crashing back on me! This afternoon an emergency case was brought in—appendicitis. Dr. Garvin operated at once. He asked me to take charge of the patient—a woman. When they brought her down from the operating room, and I lifted the cloths from her face, my heart seemed to stop beating. How I hated her, lying there so white and still. I heard the doctor's voice, in the corridor, and I went out and spoke to him. My knees trembled so that I had to lean against the wall for support. I could scarcely speak, but I told him that I could not nurse that woman—that I could not even enter her room again.

He was very kind, for he saw that I had undergone some terrible shock—said he would have Miss Ellis take my place, and that I had better go and lie down. But I could see that he was disappointed—hurt. He has told me so many times how much confidence he has in me—how he depends on me in serious cases. But I offered no explanations. It was as much as I could do to get back here to my room. That woman, of all the women in the world! God knows I never thought our paths would cross again.

I shall have to tell him. I know that now. I cannot let him think that I willingly failed him, at so critical a time. Then I will go.

Dear Dean:

After what happened today, I have thought things over, and I have decided that it will be better for you to know the truth. I cannot tell you my story—it would be too hard—too bitterly hard for me to do that. So I am going to give you something to read—a little book. It will explain what has happened to me better than I possibly can, and when you have read it, you will understand why I cannot marry you—why I could not bear to look at that woman's face again. You see, dear, there was a time in my life—a very terrible time—when it seemed to me that if I did not tell some one of the things I was going through, I should go mad—and I had no one to tell. So I wrote them down, day after day, in this little book I am giving you to read—a sort of diary of my troubles. It isn't very long. You can read the part I have marked in half an hour, if you will. And, oh, Dean, I do so want you to understand!

I shall leave this letter, and the book, on your desk, so that you can read it before dinner, and I will come to get it, and to say good by, at six o'clock.

Faithfully yours,
 AILEEN COPELAND.

Dr. Garvin laid aside the letter he had just read with a puzzled frown, and taking up the leather-covered book which accompanied it, glanced eagerly through its pages.

Friday
 It has happened at last, just as I always feared it would. Jim no longer cares for me.

If we had only kept on being poor, everything might have been different. It is a bad thing, sometimes, for a man to make a lot of money quickly. It is apt to go to his head, like wine. I wish we were back again, three years ago, in our house in Brooklyn. People so rarely know when they are happy. I told Jim there never could be any happiness in money made out of the sufferings

The Woman Trap

of war, but he only laughed at me, and said he was going to get his "while the getting was good." He did, too, and now he wants to get another woman.

Perhaps I shouldn't say that, for I haven't found out a thing—haven't tried to, in fact. And yet, I know it's true, for I know Jim. For the past three months he has neglected me so pointedly, so brutally, that I sometimes think he wishes I were dead, and when a man feels that way about his wife there is always another woman.

I haven't the least idea who she can be, and—after all, I don't suppose it makes any particular difference. It's the fact that he's tired of me that hurts. And I don't feel any wild desire to scratch out her eyes, or tear her hair, the way some women would. Stupid women, it seems to me. You can't win a man back that way. But neither can I sit at home and go mad thinking about it. I am going to have a talk with Jim.

Saturday

I asked Jim point-blank last night if he is in love with some one else. He laughed and wouldn't answer me, but there was a queer, almost crafty look in his eyes and he has hardly spoken to me since. He no longer makes excuses, now, when he leaves me alone, evenings. Has his stock of lies run out, I wonder, or is it that he simply doesn't care? It's pretty bad to realize that your husband is either a liar or a brute.

How can I fight this sinister influence that has come into my life? I feel as though I were in a dark room—pitch dark—with some one who is ready at any moment to kill me, and I don't know which way to move, in order to escape. Everything is silent, dark, with just that queer, uncanny feeling of another's presence. It's not pleasant, this knowledge of an antagonist you can't see, or touch, who may be ready, the next instant, to drive a knife into your heart. I wonder if I ought to have Jim watched—bring my enemy, whoever she is, out into the open?

I've been reading over that last line for half an hour, and I know I could never do it. I'm not willing to lower myself sufficiently to spy on Jim's actions. Perhaps the best thing to do is just to wait until he comes back to me. Men usually do, when the infatuation is over. Come back to be consoled. Strange idea. Of course, he may never come back at all, if he really cares for this woman, but in that case, nothing that I might do would make any difference. It's pretty hopeless, I guess.

Wednesday

The roast was burnt tonight, and I actually found myself worrying over it. I had to laugh, afterwards, when Jim didn't come home to dinner. What fools wives are!

I've been thinking a great deal about this woman Jim is in love with. Is she some one I know, or a creature of another world? The latter, most likely, and yet, one never can tell. If a man of Jim's prominence takes up with a chorus girl, for instance, the world is very apt to know it. Such women love to flaunt their conquests before the public. On the other hand, he might be making desperate love to one of my most intimate friends, and I'd never know it. Dances, house parties, yachting trips—what wonderful opportunities they offer for secret love-making. I've been going out so little, myself, of late—nervous breakdown, I tell everybody, and feel as though it might soon be the truth. Eva Hollingsworth says I'm losing my looks completely, and wants to know why I stay at home all the time. It's foolish, she says, and urges me to go out and have some fun. I appreciate her advice, but then, I know how she dislikes Jim.

Friday

I told Jim this morning that Eva had asked me to drive down to Long Beach with her some afternoon, and have dinner, and dance.

"Well, why don't you go?" he said coldly. "That is, if you can stand her chatter. I can't. I don't doubt she'll expect you to foot the bills." It was pretty mean of Jim to refer to the fact that Eva hasn't any money, and I told him so. Poor child—she's been mighty nice to me—the only one of my friends who has really done anything to cheer me up, and heaven knows I need it. I suppose Jim doesn't like her because she hasn't any money—he's gotten that way, since he's made such a lot himself—but just the same I wish I had her looks. Eva is certain to marry a rich man some day and have everything she wants. I hope she does. She's the best looking woman I know.

Saturday

Eva Hollingsworth came in today and dragged me off to a matinee. Between the acts she undertook to give me a lot of

good advice. She says I'm not independent enough, that I ought to make Jim jealous by flirting with other men, instead of sitting at home like a scared mouse. She offered to supply me with one from her own list of suitors, but I declined with thanks. Stupid, I suppose, but—oh, well!—it's hard to pretend you like anybody, when you don't—for me, at least. I never was much of a flirt—rather be a mouse, I guess.

Wednesday

I had a shock today. Eva Hollingsworth told me, in strictest confidence, that she's heard Jim is mad about another woman and wants to marry her. She didn't know, she said, who the woman was, but she was sure of her facts. She asked me what I meant to do about it.

I told her I didn't see what I *could* do, except wait until Jim got over his infatuation and came back to me.

"I don't think a woman gains anything by fighting in such cases," I said. "Do you?"

She laughed at that. "It's absolutely the only way," she said. "Don't you see that if you make yourself attractive to other men—let him see that they like you, admire you, are even ready to fall in love with you—it will bring him back? Unless, of course, you are willing to give him his freedom. Are you?"

"No," I said. "Why should I? I can't let Jim toss me aside like an old shoe, just because he thinks he's in love, with somebody else. After all, I am his wife."

Eva was quiet for a long time after that. I asked her what she was thinking about.

"You," she said. "And Jim. If you won't let him go, you've got to try to win him back. There simply isn't any other way. And I'm going to help you."

I wonder if she can be right.

Friday

Jim has been away every night for a week. He scarcely speaks to me, the few moments I see him at breakfast. I can't stand this much longer.

Saturday

Eva Hollingsworth has just called me up and asked me to take tea with her and some friends. I told her I would go.

Sunday

It's queer, but I'm not sure whether I enjoyed Eva's tea party yesterday or not. One of the men was a Mr. Miller, a lawyer, I believe, good-looking, and very well off, Eva told me. He seemed to be quite keen about her. The other was a writer of some sort named Andrews, young, and really very interesting. We had tea at the Biltmore, and afterwards Eva suggested that we all go over to her apartment—studio, she calls it—on Park Avenue, for some cocktails, and a dance. Mr. Miller said he had the "makings" in his brief case.

I didn't care anything about the cocktails, as I seldom drink them, so I said I thought I'd better go home, but Eva laughed in a way that made me feel hot all over, and asked if I thought Jim would be waiting for me. "I hear, on excellent authority," she whispered, "that he was seen dining at the Cascades last night with a perfect peach."

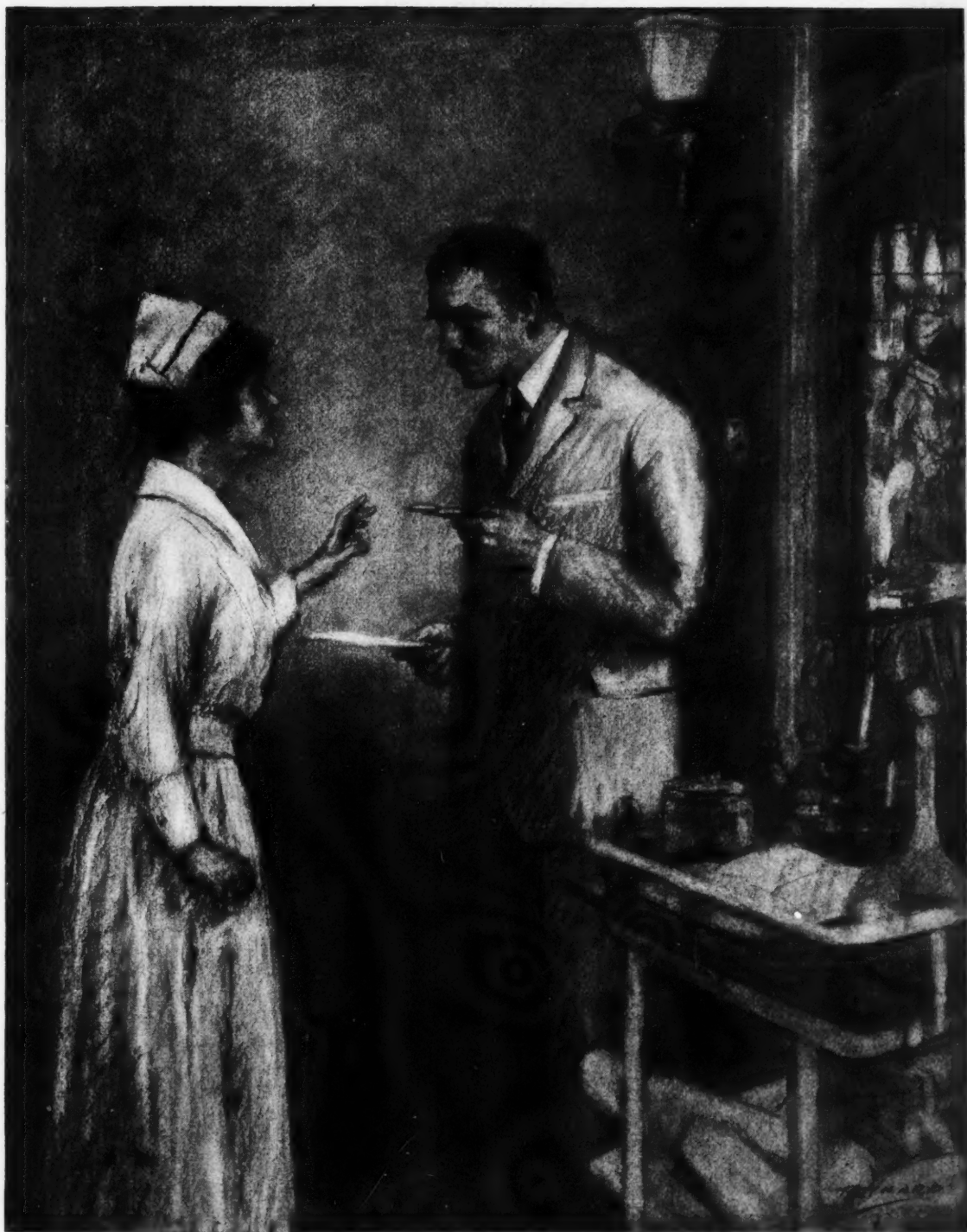
I suppose I got suddenly angry. It was true that Jim hadn't been home to dinner, and came in very late. I heard him, being awake—like a fool. I never *can* go to sleep until he comes home at night. So I said I'd go.

Eva made some cocktails, and we danced for a couple of hours, and I got home about half-past six. Eva wanted me to stay to dinner. I might as well have, too, for when I got home I found that Jim had called up, saying he had an engagement, so I dined alone. I called Eva up when I got the message, but she had gone out.

Mr. Andrews seems an interesting sort of a fellow, very gay and witty. He kept us all laughing with his stories. I imagine he drinks a good deal—just an impression. Also he would make love to a woman very quickly, if she gave him half a chance. That's always an agreeable thought, even if you haven't any intention of letting a man try it.

Sunday

Jim has been out of town for almost a week. In Washington, on important business, his office says. More graft, I suppose. That's really all it is. Eva is away, too. Visiting friends in Boston. I wish she were back. In spite of all my arguments to the contrary, I'm beginning to believe that she is right. I must go out more, no matter what people say. And it may bring him back.



"You—you've read it?" she asked timidly, noting the grimness of his face.

Monday

I was surprised to get a telephone call this morning from Mr. Andrews, the man I met with Eva that day at tea. He asked if he might call. I told him no, of course, but he begged so hard to see me that I finally agreed to take lunch with him. He was very nice, and I enjoyed it. Who wouldn't have, after the wretched, lonely week I'd had? We walked around to Eva's afterwards—Mr. Andrews said he'd heard she was back—and found her just finishing dressing. Mr. Miller, she said, was coming to take her for a drive. She made a great fuss about not having anything to offer us to drink, and dashed out to get some Scotch from a friend of hers on the floor above. It seemed to me that she was gone a long time,

but I guess I was just nervous at being alone there with Mr. Andrews, although he didn't so much as offer to hold my hand. Mr. Miller came in while Eva was away, and insisted that we go driving with them—out to some place near Yonkers—but I wouldn't. I had an idea Jim would be home. He was, and for some strange reason he acted more like a human being than he has for weeks. I told him about Eva, and my lunch with Mr. Andrews, but he didn't seem to care a bit—said it would do me good to go about more, especially since he had to be away so much on business. I smiled at that, for I have some very definite ideas about Jim's "business."

He stayed at home all the evening, but as he read the news-papers most of the time it didn't do me much good.

The Woman Trap

Thursday

Eva came in this morning looking positively ravishing in the simplest little gingham frock. That girl would look well in anything. She asked me how I would like to chaperon her on a week-end party down at Manhasset. Mr. Miller has a cottage there, she said, right on the water, and we could have a lovely time. Just a few congenial people, including Mr. Andrews, and me, if I would come. Mr. Miller is a bachelor, and his sister usually keeps house for him, but she is in Europe. We could swim and dance and have no end of fun, but of course she couldn't go unless I would agree to chaperon her.

"I'd have to ask Jim," I said, "and of course I couldn't go unless he happened to be away."

Eva laughed, that queer, sarcastic laugh of hers, and said she didn't see that I owed Jim any consideration, after the way he'd been treating me, lately. I shall ask him, anyway.

Midnight

I didn't have a chance to say anything to Jim, after all, for his secretary came for some of his things this evening and said he had been called away to Pittsburgh for a few days on important business. I think I might as well join Eva's party. It's frightfully hot in town. She said they were motoring down tomorrow afternoon, and would stop by for me in case I decided to join them.

Friday noon

I have decided to go. I shall leave a note for Jim, telling him where I am in case he gets home before I do.

Friday night

We had a lovely drive down, and just time for a swim before dinner. After that we danced. There is nobody in the party so far but Eva, Mr. Miller, Mr. Andrews and myself, but Mr. Miller says he expects a couple of others tomorrow. The cottage is really not a cottage at all, but a charming big house, beautifully furnished. My room looks right out over the water—I can see it now as I write.

Mr. Andrews danced with me most of the evening. He says I am the best dancer he has met in years, that he would rather dance with me than any woman he knows. I wonder if he is trying to make love to me. I should think he might do it very well, but I don't mean to let him try.

I wonder what Jim is doing tonight.

Saturday

I've had a delightful day, and feel ten years younger—that would make me—let me see—not quite fifteen. Mr. Andrews insists that I'm better looking than Eva, which is absurd. Now I know he is trying to make love to me. Well, if it amuses him, why not? It takes two to make a bargain. He's a splendid swimmer and looks very well in a bathing suit. Well—I must dress for dinner.

Saturday eve.

I've done a very foolish thing, I suppose, but tonight I let Mr. Andrews kiss me. We were walking on the beach, alone. I don't know what had become of Eva and Mr. Miller. She seems determined to throw Mr. Andrews and myself together—says I need a little flirtation to brighten me up. Well, a kiss isn't very important, after all, and I can salve my conscience by blaming it on the moonlight.

One thing I have found out since I've been down here, and that is that Jim's treatment of me during the past few months has killed forever something I felt for him. I'm certainly not falling in love with anyone else, but I believe I am falling out of love—with Jim.

Sunday evening

Mr. Andrews declares he's mad about me. What an idea! I'm afraid Eva has been egging him on—telling him how neglected I am, and all that. I wish she wouldn't. I asked her about it today, but she swears she hasn't said a thing, except that I am lonely and need cheering up. She seems determined to make me do something that will make Jim jealous. I can't understand why she dislikes him so. I asked her about that, too, but she only laughed and said it wasn't that she disliked Jim, but that she was so fond of me. I'm sorry she said anything to Mr. Andrews about my affairs. He is the sort of man who wouldn't need much encouragement—especially after as many cocktails as I saw him drink at dinner tonight.

Monday

God help me—what shall I do? These last few hours of agony have almost killed me. I hardly know how I got home—home! I have no home. This is Jim's house. I've got to get out of it.

I can't think, and yet, it was only last night. How awful it all was. I had written in this diary the things I have just read above, and gone to bed. I was frightfully tired. Everything had been hectic at dinner. I saw Eva whispering to Mr. Andrews, and looking at me, and I remember that I wondered at the time what she was telling him. God—if I had only known! I didn't quite like the way he talked to me during dinner, but I put it down to the drinks he'd taken. Eva kept urging me to join them, but I drank almost nothing.

While we were dancing, Mr. Andrews whispered that he had got my message. I didn't know what he meant, and said so, but he only laughed. I hadn't sent him any message, of course, but I put it down to some silly joke on Eva's part, and forgot about it.

We all went to bed about one. Mr. Andrews was very gay when we parted in the hall. As I was undressing I heard him whistling in his room, which was next to mine.

I must have gone to sleep, then, for the next thing I remember was hearing a noise, and suddenly I realized that there was some one in the room. The moonlight was streaming in, and I saw a shadow between me and the window. I thought it was a burglar and started to scream. Then I heard a voice—it was Mr. Andrews's—speaking to me—begging me not to arouse the house. He said he had got my message—that the door between our rooms would be unlocked. I was absolutely stupefied, because I had tried the door, the first night I came, and knew it was locked, and of course I had never unlocked it since. All the time Mr. Andrews was talking to me, telling me how mad he was about me—begging me not to send him away. I hardly heard him, for I was thinking about the message he said I had sent him. Eva had given it to him, he said. I did not know what to do. I realized that if I screamed there would be a nasty scandal, for everybody would believe I had unlocked that door. And I couldn't put him out by main force. So I tried to persuade him. I told him it was all a mistake, and begged him to go at once.

Then all of a sudden he knelt down beside the bed and put his arms about me. I struggled, but he held me tight, saying he didn't understand what I meant, that he loved me, and couldn't leave me. He must have thought that I wasn't in earnest—that I was coquetting with him. I remembered something he had said the day before—that a man often insults a woman by not insulting her. Then he began to kiss me, over and over. I could have killed him. I screamed at him to go.

Then I heard voices in the hall, and somebody burst open the door and switched on the lights. It was Jim. He stood staring at me, a queer smile on his face, almost a sneer. Behind him were Eva and Mr. Miller. Mr. Andrews clutched his pajama coat about his neck—I had almost torn it off in our struggle—and went into his room without a word. His face was white as a sheet. I began to speak, and then I must have fainted, for everything was blotted out. I came home this morning. Mr. Miller had his chauffeur drive me up. Eva sent word to me that she was ill, and unable to talk to anyone. I haven't seen Jim since. I shall not understand it all until I find out who unlocked that door.

Tuesday

Jim's lawyer has just been to see me—a little rat-faced man with a smile that makes me feel afraid. He says that if I let Jim have a divorce everything can be arranged quietly, but that if I try to fight the case, there will be a frightful scandal. I don't know what to do.

Wednesday

Mr. Andrews came here this morning. I refused to see him at first but he said it was most important. He blames Eva for everything—says she told him I was madly in love with him, and would leave the door between our rooms unlocked that night. He thinks she must have unlocked it herself. What possible reason could she have had for doing such a thing? I don't believe it. She always seemed to be my friend. And yet it's queer she hasn't been to see me.

Mr. Andrews says he will go on the stand and tell everything just as it happened, if I want him to, but that it will probably ruin his life. It seems he is married. I laughed, and asked him what about my life.

My lawyer says Jim has a strong case, that Eva is ready to swear that I gave her the message to Mr. Andrews, that she and Mr. Miller saw him kiss me, down at (Continued on page 105)

YOU CAN NEVER TELL WHAT A WOMAN MEANS

By What She Says

He said: "All you have to do to win a woman, is to say hateful things and pretend to be a cynic and stand-offish until she feels like slapping you."

She said (about him): "Oh—him! What a prune!"

A lovable love story

by ROYAL BROWN

Illustrations by Lee Conrey

ETERNAL is the hope that springs in the human breast, especially if its possessor be feminine—and twenty! As, indubitably, Thelma Baird was. Suspended from Smith for two weeks by a decree she believed unjust but accepted in silent scorn—silent that is, in so far as the faculty was concerned—she promptly tried to fashion a silver lining for even that cloud. She, however, was in Massachusetts, and her father, a colonel in the regular army, was way out West in Kansas, at Leavenworth. At close range, on the arm of his morris chair for instance, she could have had him with the white flag flying in no time, but to wind him around her little finger by telegraph was something else again. His answer to her night letter proved that.

This, ignoring her assurance that she could and would explain "everything" by letter, gave her her marching orders in true military fashion.

"I suppose," she mused, her engaging brows puckered, "that it would be foolish to take my shaded chiffon. Still——"

The voice of her roommate was heard in the land.

"Have you heard from him yet?" she demanded, from the threshold. "You have! Oh Thummy—what did he say?"

One score and no years before, Thelma's mother, who had died in the Philippines when Thelma was three, had christened her in the belief that she had discovered a name that defied contraction. Thummy was striking proof of what the devilish ingenuity of the human mind can achieve.

"Exiled to Siberia!" murmured Thummy, absently

"What!" incredulously.

Thummy turned impatient eyes toward her. "Come in and shut the door, Dot," she commanded. "His telegram is on the dresser—read it yourself."



"If you are real," announced Gas,
"please come down."

Dot pounced upon it.

Am wiring twenty dollars. Absolutely refuse permission for you to go to New York. You will proceed to Woticnic Lakes. Bill will meet you at the junction. Report arrival.

Dot looked up. "Who's Bill?" she asked, selecting the vital with true feminine infallibility.

"Bill? Oh, *he* runs a camp at Woticnic. *That's* down in Maine, ten miles beyond the jumping-off place. He was father's orderly in the Philippines."

"Is he interesting?"

"Who, Bill?" Thummy looked incredulous, then grinned. "Why he's as old as dad and has a mustache like a walrus."

Evidently the picture brought memories, for her grin widened.

"I used to order him about as if I were his C. O.," she explained. "Once, when I was about five, I heard father say that Bill would let me stick pins in him. I tried it—"

"You didn't! Oh Thummy, what did he say?"

"Ouch! Stop that, you little devil!" quoted Thummy, who had the gift of mimicry.

Dot grinned, in palpable imitation of Thummy—and with as much success as imitators usually achieve.

"But what's the idea of your going there—"

"It's the nearest approach to a nunnery dad can think of on short notice," explained Thummy. "At this time of year there will be nobody there but Bill and his guides of course. I'm to repent in sackcloth and ashes—"

"All men? It—doesn't sound quite—proper!"

"Let's hope," observed Thummy, coolly, "it won't be."

This brought her back to the shaded chignon. Her brows puckered again as she considered it.

No daughter of the gods, divinely tall, was she. Sixty-two inches comprised what there was of her, up and down. Nevertheless, various contemporaries (male) had fervently assured her that her little finger—measuring perhaps two inches—was more desirable than *all* of all the other girls in the world. And if anybody had asked to know how they got that way Thummy could have jolly well told them.

From her earliest youth she had had a regiment of admirers. And she had learned about mankind from them.

As for the shaded chignon, it lay outspread on her bed. Even a masculine eye could not have failed to see that it blended, miraculously, with the coppery tones in Thummy's hair, and pointed the gold glints in her eyes. Aside from all that, it bore the hall mark of Paris. Which means, like the costume Gunga Din wore, it—

Was nothing much before

And rather less than 'arf of that be-ind.

The colonel, fortunately—he had a tendency toward apoplexy—had never seen it. Actually it rather took Thummy's breath away. But she loved it. As for its effect—well, a young man from Williams had been driven quite mad by it. And for that he had gotten his face well slapped by a blazing-eyed Thummy right in the middle of a fox trot, all to the wide-eyed interest of other fox trotters and the subsequent interest of the dean.

"I don't care, he deserved it," Thummy had contended, ungenerately. "He's an awful example of what comes of reading Scott Fitzgerald and taking it seriously. Darned old would-be petter!"

This, however, Thummy had not bothered to tell the dean. She felt that the dean wasn't sympathetic. It may be that Thummy was right. Anyway, she found herself suspended, not so far as she could tell, for having resented the young man's advances but for having done so in public.

"Next time I'll ask them to please step outside before handing them one," she assured Dot.

In her heart she knew that the shaded chignon was to blame. But she forgave it and was willing to forgive it even to seventy times seven.

"I think," she murmured, "I'll take it anyway."

"Take *that* with you!" echoed Dot, incredulously. "Why, Thummy Baird!"

"Otherwise," said Thummy, "you might be tempted to wear it in my absence. And it's dangerous stuff!"

Dot blushed. "I wouldn't have worn it!" But she looked disappointed.

"Besides," Thummy went on, "I may get desperate and decide to vamp Bill. After first pulverizing him with those riding breeches you startled the natives at Northfield with last month. Where are they?"

And so Thummy went to Woticnic. There, at the junction,

standing on the little station platform that provided an oasis in a desert of snow, stood Bill, past sixty but straight and stalwart as ever.

"You're twice as handsome and only half as bowlegged as you used to be," she assured him, picking up the acquaintance where it had been dropped ten years before. "Miss the army?"

Bill's eyes grew somber. "They turned me down when I volunteered for that last mess," he said. "Told me I was too old for active service. Me!" The bitterness of that smote him anew. "I told them that if that was the case the army could go to—"

He broke off short and blushed deeply.

Thummy grinned. "Dad says it's already gone there," she assured him. "Where's the telegraph office—I've got to report arrival."

"Over this way," he said, and picking up her baggage led the way into the station.

There she busied herself with a yellow blank, achieving this—

Arrived Woticnic Junction as per official order sixty three hundred and seventy-two. Bill met me at the station and has been commissioned as baggage train. He sends love and kisses to my darling, sweetheart, long-suffering, but never impatient, dad and so do I.

This she handed to the operator. He ran through it and scratched his head. "Want to send this?" he demanded, as if he had doubts.

"Collect!" Thummy affirmed. She turned to Bill. "Let's go!"

Instead Bill shifted uneasily. "There's four young fellows at the camp," he blurted out finally. "I didn't know but what I ought to wire the colonel—"

"Four? Egypt's Queen!" Thummy grinned ecstatically. "I'll add a line to my wire," she promised.

This is what she added:

Feel sure I'll have more fun here than I would have had in New York. Thank you for arranging it.

"I'd like," she thought, as she followed Bill to the waiting sleigh, "to see Dad's face when he reads that!"

The blanketed horses gave them patient glances, their breath making frost clouds in the keen air. Thummy seated herself and Bill tucked her in.

"It's cold riding," he explained—"whoa there!" He got in beside her and took up the reins. "Forty inches of snow this winter—"

"Tell me all about them—the four men," she interrupted.

Bill looked uneasy. "Well," he began, dubiously, "they're Tech men. Started coming up here when they were still in college. There were ten of 'em then and they planned to come again every year but they kept dropping away—"

"Sounds like ten little niggers," commented Thummy. "One got married and then there were nine. These four aren't married, are they?"

"No. But one of 'em is going to be soon—"

"I hope," suggested Thummy, her demure eyes apparently busy with the beauty of the winter landscape, "that you aren't being personal." Then as he gave her a puzzled glance she added, "Don't mind me, go on."

Bill touched the off horse with the end of his whip. "One of 'em's an advertising man. Name's Gaskill Lewis, but the boys call him Gas. Then there's Jay Morris. He's engaged—"

"That alone makes him irresistible to any woman. But I'll pray for self-restraint," murmured Thummy. "Next?"

"Well, there's Amos Dodge. He's sort of fat. Superintendent of a car line down Connecticut way. The other's Holliston Evans. He's a civil engineer. I reckon he's sort of a woman hater—"

"Oh, he is, is he?" thought Thummy. Aloud, "I hope they don't mind my coming."

It had not really occurred to her that they would. And so Bill's expression made her eyes widen.

"I don't know," he answered, dubiously. "They went up on the head of the lake yesterday to spend the night at my camp there. They weren't around when your father's telegram came. So they don't know yet—"

"I'll try to break the news gently," promised Thummy. "And perhaps they'll be glad to see me."

"Mebbe," admitted Bill. "But you see they sort of set store on getting off somewhere where they can do as they please—go without shaving for a spell and say what they d—"

Once again Bill, with a slow but sure flush, caught himself.



"You darling!" he murmured—"I feel as if I were dreaming."

"Oh, *that* will be all right," Thummy coolly assured him. "I'll not bother to shave either. And they can say what they damned please. We all will."

Perhaps this should have relieved Bill—but he did not look relieved.

"I'm not sure what the colonel would think," he began.

"I am," she informed him, looking like a rosy angel who has just discovered the key to some celestial jam closet. "Oh, that's the camp, isn't it?"

The break in the evergreens merging, as the light lessened,

into purple black blotches against the snow, revealed the main camp, with its scattering of log cabins about it.

"Yes," affirmed Bill and glanced about. "I guess they're not back yet. But they ought to be in any moment. Whoa there!"

The room Bill led her to was off a balcony that ran along three sides of the living room, with its great open fireplace. A bit of a room, as austere in its appointments as a monk's cell. But as the door closed behind Bill, Thummy surveyed it with eyes that glowed. Then, surrendering to the need for an emotional outlet, she deliberately turned a handspring.



"It's unsuitable but absolutely irresistible," she mused.

"Oh boy!" she breathed ecstatically. "Four of 'em!"

They came back to camp, the four of them, just as the western sun dropped below the hill tops. And as the lights of the camp broke into view they let out a shout that, if there were a welkin about, surely made it ring. When Bill appeared at the door they greeted him with that burst of masculine fervency to which a dash of profanity is added, merely for friendliness and piquancy.

"Shh!" begged Bill, piteously.

They stopped short in their onward rush, to regard him in honest surprise.

"Somebody sick?" demanded Gas Lewis. "Or have you turned Methodist parson during our absence, Bill?"

Bill made gestures. "A lady!" he explained in a stage whisper.

The four of them, mackinaw-clad and snowshoe-shod, gaped at him. Then, like a well trained chorus, they came out together with an explosive, incredulous:

"Lady!"

"Came this afternoon," corroborated Bill, unhappily.

Gas Lewis took a deep breath. "Well," he announced, "I'll be——"

"Shh! Shh!" beseeched Bill. "She'll hear you!"

"Shh! Shh! is right," admitted Gas, disgustedly. "Now look here, Bill, what kind of a trick is this to play on us——"

"I'll explain it, boys——"

"Explain it? You can't. I came down here for a little breathing spell. You have no idea what life in a big city is these days, Bill, with hundreds of unmarried women in every block and a little church around every corner."

"Shut up, Gas," Amos Dodge interrupted. "Say, Bill, when do we eat?"

"When do we eat!" groaned Gas. "That's Fat all over. Like the well known domestic animal in whose image he was created he is oblivious to the fate that impends. He thinks only of his trough——"

"Fate that impends who?" demanded Amos.

"Not you," admitted Gas. "If a way to a man's heart is through his stomach you"—he paused and surveyed that portion of Amos's anatomy with austere eyes—"are safe."

From within the camp came the silveriest voice imaginable—Thummy had that among her bag of tricks, too.

"Oh, Bill!" it trilled sweetly. "Have you enough hot water to draw a bath for me?"

A forty-five slug, whistling by his ear, would not have startled Bill more.

"Draw a bath for me!" echoed Gas, *sotto voce*. "Oh, Bill, have you any bath perfume? Fat Amos's valet forgot to pack his."

From the camp came the summons again, a little less silvery this time. And Bill turned helpless eyes toward the rest of them.

"His master's voice!" apostrophized Gas.

"Run along, old priceless. The lady doth sound to me like one who wants what she wants when she wants it. You have sinned greatly, but I have a hunch you'll be punished as you deserve."

This was not intended to carry beyond Bill, but Thummy's ears were good and she had no compunction about eaves-dropping. She smiled sweetly as, clutching a colorful negligée about her, she opened her door to Bill's knock.

"Oh, don't bother to heat it specially!" she assured Bill—Bill looking as if he had been dipped in the same color the sunset was incarnadining the western sky with. "Anyway, I suppose it's most dinner time."

"About fifteen minutes if"—his eyes determinedly averted—"you'll be ready."

"I'll be ready," she assured him.

And, letting the negligée slip from her pretty shoulders the moment the door closed behind him, she proved that they who say that a woman cannot dress quickly lie through their teeth. In less than fifteen minutes she poised herself before one of those wavery, quavery mirrors that seem specially manufactured for summer cottages and camps. She could not see very much of herself——

"And," she mused, "there's so much of me to be seen."

In her defense be it said that she had thought twice before wearing the shaded chiffon. Her first thought was that it was absolutely unsuitable. Her second thought was that it was absolutely irresistible.

From the living room, below, came the sound of masculine voices. Expertly she powdered her nose, then her shoulders.

"Let's go!" she breathed, and stepped out to the balcony.

Four pairs of eyes focused upon her simultaneously.

"Oh!" she gasped, her eyes wide and lovely, "I didn't know——"

No woman would have believed her, but the four men did. They gazed up and she gazed down, as if quite unconscious of the loveliness she presented to them in the shaded chiffon's calculated allure.

The spell was broken by Gas. He took a deep and obvious breath.

"If you are real," he announced, with plaintive audacity, "and not a mirage appearing before a weary traveler's eyes, please come down."

The favor of Thummy's smile descended to him. She knew him at once, as well as if she had known him for years. She had met his kind and catalogued it, for future reference, before.

"But," she protested, "I don't look appropriate——"

"You mean we don't," retorted Gas. "But that's our misfortune, and our fault. You see we had no warning."

From which, surely, no one would have guessed that he had just recently announced that the rest could shave and doll

up if they were that particular brand of idiot, but that he for one had come here to take his ease and that he'd be double asterisked if he'd do the deb-hound stunt.

"I could change," suggested Thummy. "Perhaps I'd better—"

"If you do," swore Gas, "I'll go out in the garden and—eat—snow! Please come down and bless us, just as you are."

And so, with just a lingering shade of reluctance, Thummy came down, to lift demure—very demure eyes—as Gas, having blithely introduced himself, performed that office for his less up-and-coming companions.

This achieved, Thummy forgot that she hadn't officially been aware of their return.

"And which," she demanded, her voice innocent but her eyes anything but that, "was the one that said that about the bath perfume?"

They were taken by surprise. Then Fat Amos guffawed and looked at Gas. But he was equal to the occasion.

"Oh, that," he replied, with blithe mendacity, "was old Holly Evans here! He's a regular woman hater—don't mind him!"

Thummy's eyes, half veiled by her beautiful lashes, slanted up toward Holly. She discovered him to be long and lean, with that ease of carriage that suggests strength and physical fitness. In him the effect was heightened by his sunburnt hair and the tan that many days among the dry lands of southern California had bequeathed him. He was not handsome, but he was attractive. At least that was Thummy's first verdict.

Now, as he met her glance, he blushed under his tan.

"Are you really a woman hater?" asked Thummy, widening her eyes appropriately.

The appearance of Bill, announcing "chow," saved Holly.

Gas did his best to monopolize her during dinner and after that was finished—

"One sneaked out to the kitchen," thought Thummy, "and then there were three!"

The three, however, proved all that any girl could ask. They established her in front of the great open fireplace and then, seating themselves, courtier-like, evinced a commendable readiness to entertain and be entertained. Fat Amos who, dinner over with, usually sank into a chair and yawned, preparatory to tuning up for what Gas referred to as "that nasal solo in B flat—very flat!" stayed wide awake; even Jay Morris proved that an engaged man is not necessarily blind to other feminine charms.

Gas was disgusted with him.

"Somebody," he assured Holly as they were about to retire, "ought to telegraph his baby—"

This far had he gotten when he found himself overborne.

"Now," demanded Holly, "how about that bath perfume? Are you an unmitigated liar or are you not?"

But Gas, with a herculean surge, managed to rid himself of his incumbance.

"Gosh!" he groaned, rubbing his chest.

"You darn near squashed my wishbone in, you big goat." Then, foreseeing that hostilities were to be renewed, he added hastily: "Oh, I'll admit that the story of George Wash-

ington and his little hatchet never made much impression on me! There're times when a good large whopper is justifiable—"

"Even if somebody else gets the blame?"

"You can stand it! It doesn't make any difference to you Holly, but"—solemnly—"believe me or not, I'm hit!"

"I don't doubt it! It's a habit with you. You were as full of holes as a sieve before you left Tech—"

"It's the real thing this time," Gas assured him. "On the level, Holly, did you ever see such a girl?"

"Not since I left New York," admitted Holly. "They're wearing 'em even lower and higher there—"

"You know what I mean. How many girls, dumped down in the midst of four rough-necks such as we looked like, could have carried it off the way—"

"Not more than a million—"

Gas reached for a pillow and let it drive.

"Take that, you old cynic!" he suggested. "I tell you, Holly, life will be an empty dream if I can't persuade her to park her head on my manly chest while she murmurs yes—"

Holly yawned "Laura Jean Libbey would have been pleased to meet you," he commented. "But I'm going to bed—I'm sleepy."

Nevertheless, he lay awake long after Gas's regular breathing testified that his roommate had fallen asleep. And curiously enough, the picture that filled his mind was of Thummy—Thummy as her eyes had challenged him, Thummy as she had sat in front of the blazing logs, queening it over his fellows. And then he thought of Gas. Funny, how some fellows seemed born that way. Girls never made them feel self-conscious or uncomfortable.

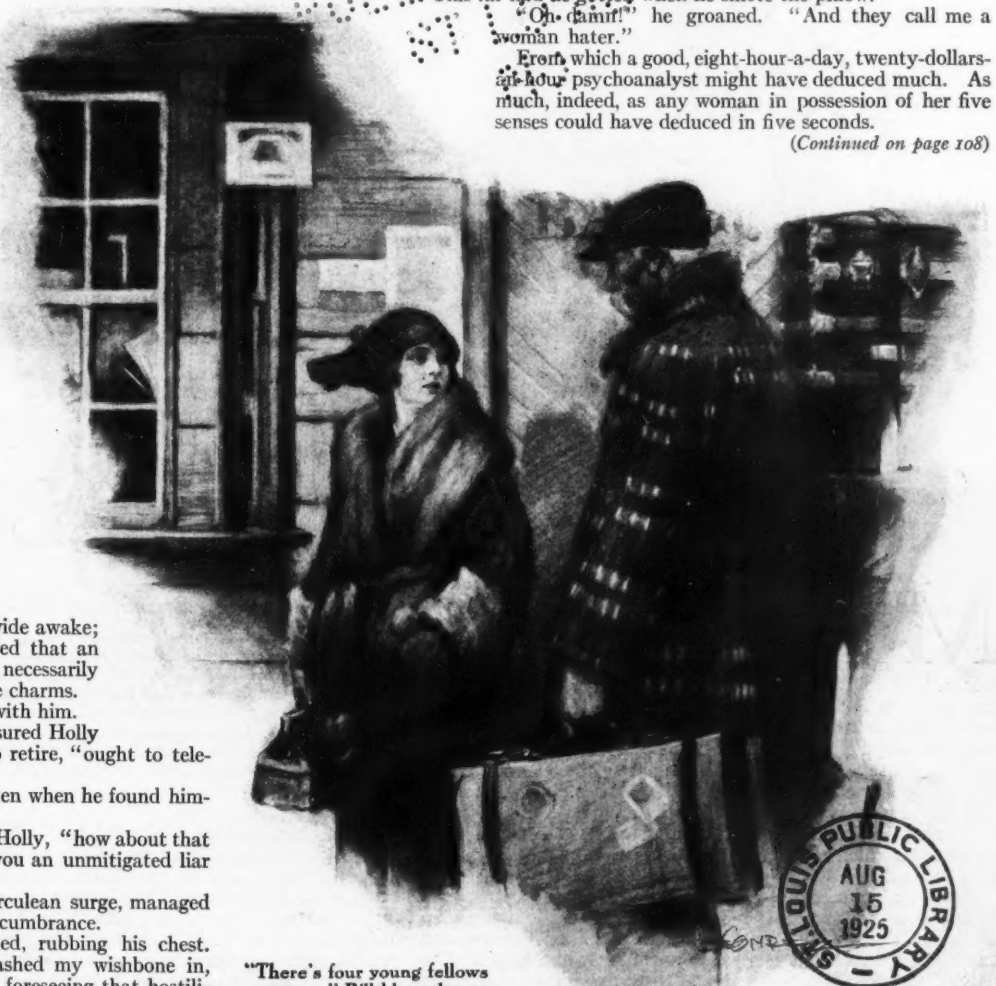
"It's a gift," he mused. "But I don't see why in thunder I—"

This far had he gotten when he smote the pillow.

"Oh, damn!" he groaned. "And they call me a woman hater."

From which a good, eight-hour-a-day, twenty-dollars-a-hour psychoanalyst might have deduced much. As much, indeed, as any woman in possession of her five senses could have deduced in five seconds.

(Continued on page 108)



"There's four young fellows at camp," Bill blurted out. "Four!" she gurgled. "Egypt's Queen!"



"Work—it's the thing in life!" roared Garstin. "Work first and the love of women second."



Does a Woman Ever Grow Too Old

DECEMBER LOVE

MISS VAN TUYN had not intended to stay long in London when she came over from Paris. But now she changed her mind. She was pulled at by three interests, Lady Sellingworth, Craven and "the living bronze." A cold hand had touched her vanity on the night of the dinner in Soho. She had felt angry with Craven for not coming back to the Café Royal and angrier still with Lady Sellingworth for keeping him with her. Although she did not positively know that Craven had spent the last part of the evening in the drawing room at Berkeley Square she felt certain that he had done so. Probably Lady Sellingworth had pressed him to go in. But perhaps he had been glad to go, perhaps he had submitted to an influence which had carried him for the time out of his younger friend's reach.

Miss Van Tuyn resolved definitely that Craven must at once be added to the numerous men who were mad about her. So much was due to her vanity. Besides she liked Craven, and might grow to like him very much if she knew him better. She decided to know him better, much better, and wrote her letter to him.

That she would some day know the living bronze she felt certain. For she meant to know him. Garstin's brutal com-

The Beginning of the Story

No one had ever learned why Lady Sellingworth, the famous beauty, had suddenly withdrawn from society and surrendered to old age. It was whispered that her surprising capitulation had had some connection with a mysterious trip to Paris and the disappearance of her famous jewels—and a mysterious stranger. Even her young American friend Beryl Van Tuyn did not share the secret, but she did recognize Lady Sellingworth's charm and fascina-

ment on him had not frightened her. She did not believe it to be just. Garstin was always brutal in his comments. And he lived so perpetually among shady, or more than shady, people that it was difficult for him to believe in the decency of anybody who was worth knowing. Miss Van Tuyn was not going to allow herself to be influenced by the putrescence of Garstin's mind. She had her own views on everything and usually held to them. She had quite decided that she would get to know the living bronze through Garstin, who always managed to know anyone he was interested in. Being totally unconventional and not, as he said, caring a damn about the proprieties, if he wished

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Illustrations
by
W.D. Stevens

To Give Up Her Desire for Young Love?

—by **ROBERT HICHENS**

Author of "The Garden of Allah," "Bella Donna" and "Barbary Sheep"

tion in spite of her sixty years, and she saw, too, that young Craven was slipping into an interest in the elder woman which was something more than curiosity, more than homage to a distinguished woman. Beryl liked Craven, just how much she had not considered, but she probably would have denied that jealousy was at the bottom of her misgivings over his intimacy with Lady Sellingworth. Besides, she had recently been strangely fascinated by a tall, dark man whom she had seen at a bohemian restaurant and whom she had described as "a living bronze."

to speak to some one he spoke to him, if he wished to paint him he told him to come along to the studio. No shyness hindered him; no doubts about himself ever assailed him. He just did what he wanted to do without *arrière pensée*. There was certainly strength in Garstin although it was not moral strength.

The morning after the dinner in Soho Miss Van Tuyn telegraphed to Fanny Cronin to come over at once, with Bourget's latest works, and engaged an apartment at Claridge's. Although she sometimes dined at the *Bella Napoli* she preferred to issue forth from some lair which was unmistakably smart and com-

fortable. Claridge's was both, and everybody came there. Miss Cronin wired obedience and would be on the way immediately. Meanwhile Miss Van Tuyn received Craven's note in answer to hers.

She grasped all its meaning, surface and subterranean, immediately. It meant a very polite, very carefully masked, withdrawal from the sphere of her influence. The passage about Soho was perfectly clear to her mind, although to many it might have seemed to convey an agreeably worded acceptance of her suggestion, only laying its translation into action in a rather problematical future, the sort of future which would become present when "neither of us has an engagement."

Craven had evidently been "got at" by Adela Sellingworth. On the morning after Miss Van Tuyn's telegram to Paris Fanny Cronin arrived, with Bourget's latest book in her hand, and later they settled in at Claridge's. Miss Cronin went to bed, and Miss Van Tuyn, who had no engagement for that evening, went presently to the telephone. Although in her note to Craven by implication she had left it to him to suggest a tête-à-tête dinner in Soho she was now resolved to ask him. She was a girl of the determined modern type, not much troubled by

delicacies, or inclined to wait humbly on the pleasure of men. If a man did not show her the way, she was quite ready to show the way to him. Without being precisely of the huntress type she knew how to take bow and arrow in her hand.

She rang up Craven and the following dialogue took place at the telephone:

"Yes? Yes?"

"Is Mr. Craven there?"

"Yes. I am Alick Craven. Who is it, please?"

"Don't you know?"

"One minute! Is it—I'm afraid I don't."

"Beryl Van Tuyn."

"Of course! I knew the voice at once, but somehow I couldn't place it. How are you, Miss Van Tuyn?"

"Dangerously well."

"That's splendid."

"And you?"

"I'm what dull people call very fit and cheery."

"How dreadful! Now, tell me—are you engaged tonight? I'm sure you aren't, because I want you to take me to dine at the *Bella Napoli*. We agreed to tell each other when we were free. So I take you at your word."

"Oh, I'm awfully sorry!"

"What?"

"I'm ever so sorry."

"Why?"

"I have a dinner engagement tonight."

"What a bore! But surely you can get out of it?"

"I'm afraid not. No, really I can't."

"Send an excuse! Say you are ill."

"I can't honestly. It's—it's rather important. Besides the fact is I'm the host."

"Oh!"

The timbre of Miss Van Tuyn's voice changed slightly at this crisis in the conversation.

"Oh—if you're the host of course . . . You really are the host?"

"Yes—I really am. So you see!"

"No, but I hear and understand. Never mind. Ask me another night."

"Yes—that's it. Another night. Thank you so much. By the way, does the living bronze—"

"What? The living what?"

"Bronze! . . . the living bronze—"

"Oh yes. Well, what about it?"

"Does it wear petticoats or trousers?"

"Trousers."

"Then I think I rather hate it."

"You—"

But at this point the exchange intervened, so he put up the receiver. Almost immediately afterwards he was rung up by Lady Sellingworth, hung on the edge of disappointment for an instant, and then was caught back into happiness. For she had abruptly changed her mind after hearing of Miss Van Tuyn's invitation. But why had she meant to give up the dinner? What had happened between his exit from her house and her ringing him up? For he could not believe in the excuse of ill health put forward by her. He was puzzled. Women certainly were difficult to understand. But it was all right now. His audacity—for he thought it rather audacious of him to have asked Lady Sellingworth to dine alone with him at the *Bella Napoli*—was going to be rewarded. As he changed his clothes he hummed to himself:

"O *Napoli! Bella Napoli!*"

At Claridge's meanwhile Miss Van Tuyn was not humming. As she came away from the telephone she felt in a very bad temper. Things were not going well for her just now in London and she was accustomed to things going well. As in Craven's letter so just now at the telephone she had been aware of resistance, of a distinct holding back from her influence. This was a rare experience for her and she resented it. Craven was going to do something which he preferred doing to dining with her. The telltale line showed itself in her low white forehead.

She went to the window of her sitting room, drew the curtain back, pulled aside the blind and looked out. The night was going to be fine; the sky was clear and starry; the London outside drew her. She dropped the blind, drew the curtains forward, went to the fire and lighted a cigarette.

She wondered where Craven was dining. At some delightful restaurant with some one he liked very much. She was quite sure of that; or—perhaps he had told her a lie! Perhaps he

was dining at No. 4-A, Berkeley Square! Suddenly she felt certain that she had hit on the truth. That was it! He was dining in Berkeley Square with Adela Sellingworth. They were going to have another evening together. Possessed by this conviction, and acting on an almost fierce impulse—for her vanity was now suffering severely—she went again to the telephone and rang up Lady Sellingworth. When she was put through, and heard the characteristic husky voice of her so called friend at the other end of the line, she begged Lady Sellingworth to come and dine at Claridge's that night and have a quiet talk over things. As she had expected she got a refusal. Lady Sellingworth was engaged. Miss Van Tuyn, with a discreet half question, half expression of disappointment, elicited the fact that Lady Sellingworth was dining out, not having people at home. The conversation concluded at both ends with charming expressions of regret, and promises to be together as soon as was humanly possible.

Again Miss Van Tuyn believed an excuse; again her instinct told her that she had invited some one to dine who was glad to be engaged. There was only one explanation of the two happy refusals. She was now absolutely positive that Lady Sellingworth and Craven were going to dine together and not in Berkeley Square. Where would they go? She thought of the *Bella Napoli*! It was very unlikely that they would meet anyone there whom they both knew, and they had met at the *Bella Napoli*. Perhaps they—or perhaps she—had romantic recollections connected with it! Perhaps they had arranged the other evening to dine there again—and without Beryl Van Tuyn this time! If so the intervention at the telephone must have seemed an ironic stroke to them both.

After sitting still for a few minutes, always with the telltale line in her forehead, Miss Van Tuyn got up with an air of purpose. She went to a door at the end of the sitting room, opened it, crossed a lobby, opened double doors, and entered a bedroom in which a large mild-looking woman with square cheeks, chestnut-colored smooth hair, large chestnut-colored eyes under badly painted eyebrows, and a mouth with teeth that suggested a very kind and well meaning rabbit, was lying in bed, with a cup and a pot of camomile tea beside her, and Bourget's "*Mensonges*" in her hand. This was Fanny Cronin, originally from Philadelphia, but now largely French in a simple and unpretending way. The painted eyebrows must not be taken as evidence against her. They were the only artificiality of which Miss Cronin was guilty; and as an unkind fate had absolutely denied her any eyebrows of her own she had conceived it only decent to supply their place.

"I've got back to '*Mensonges*,' Beryl," she said, as she saw Miss Van Tuyn. "After all, there's nothing like it. It bites right into one, even on a third reading."

"Dear old Fanny! I'm so glad you're being bitten into. I know how you love it, and I'm not going to disturb you. I only came to tell you that I'm going out this evening and may possibly come back late."

"I hope you will enjoy yourself, dear, and meet pleasant people."

She went out of the room, and Fanny Cronin settled comfortably down once more to the competent exercise of her profession.

It was now nearly eight o'clock. Miss Van Tuyn went to her bedroom and began to "do" things for herself. She began by taking off her gown and putting on a loose wrapper. Then she sat down before the dressing table and changed the way in which her corn-colored hair was done, making it sit much closer to the head than before and look much less striking and conspicuous. When she was quite satisfied with her hair she got out of her wrapper, and presently put on an absolutely plain black coat and skirt, a black hat which came down very low on her forehead, a black veil and black suede gloves. Then she took a tightly furled umbrella with an ebony handle out of her wardrobe, picked up her purse, unlocked her door and stepped out into the lobby.

Her French maid appeared from somewhere. She was a rather elderly woman with a clever, but not unpleasantly subtle, face. Miss Van Tuyn said a few words to her in a low voice, opened the lobby door and went out.

She took the lift, glided down, walked slowly and carelessly across the hall and passed out by the swing door.

As Craven had predicted it was a fine clear night, dry underfoot, starry overhead. If Miss Van Tuyn had had with her a chosen companion she would have enjoyed her walk. She was absolutely self-possessed, and thoroughly capable of taking care of herself. No terrors of London affected her spirit. But she was angry and bored at being alone. She felt almost for the



Mrs. Hodson sat looking very determined and almost imperious as she listened.

first time in her life neglected and even injured. And she was determined to try to find out whether her strong suspicions about Lady Sellingworth and Craven were well founded.

"If they are dining together they don't wish me to know it," Miss Van Tuyn said to herself as she walked along Grosvenor Square and turned down Carlos Place. "For if I had known it they might have felt obliged to invite me to join them, as I was inviting them, and as I was the one who introduced Adela Sellingworth to the *Bella Napoli*."

In passing through Berkeley Square she deliberately walked

on the left side of it and presently came to the house where Lady Sellingworth lived. The big mansion was dark. As Miss Van Tuyn went by it she felt an access of ill humor, and for an instant she knew something of the feeling which had often come to its owner, the feeling of being abandoned to loneliness in the midst of a city which held multitudes who were having a good time.

She walked on and eventually came into Regent Street. There were a good many people here, and several loitering men looked hard at her. But she walked composedly on, keeping at an even steady pace. At the main door of the Café Royal three

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or four men were lounging. She did not look at them as she went by. But presently she felt that she was being followed. This did not disturb her. She often went out alone in Paris on foot, though not at night, and was accustomed to being followed. She knew perfectly well how to deal with impertinent men. In Shaftesbury Avenue the man who was dogging her footsteps came nearer and presently, though she didn't turn her head, she knew that he was walking almost level with her, and that his eyes were fixed steadily on her. Without altering her pace she took a shilling out of the purse she was carrying and held it in her hand. The man drew up till he was walking by her side. She felt that he was going to speak to her. She stopped, held out the hand with the shilling in it, and said:

"Here's a shilling! Take it. I'm sorry I can't afford more than that."

As she finished speaking for the first time she looked at her pursuer, and met the brown eyes of the living bronze. He stood for an instant gazing at her veil and then turned round and walked away in the direction of Regent Street. The shilling dropped from her hand to the pavement. She did not try to find it, but at once went on.

It was very seldom that her self-possession was shaken. It was not exactly shaken now. But the recognition of the stranger whom she had been thinking about in the man who had followed her in the street had certainly startled her. For a moment a strong feeling of disgust overcame her and she thought of Dick's brutal comment upon this man. Was he then really one of the horrible night loungers who abound in all great cities? It was possible. He must have been hanging about near the door of the Café Royal when she passed and watching the passers-by. He must have seen her then. Could he have recognized her? In that case perhaps he was merely an adventurous fellow who had been pushed to the doing of an impertinent thing by his strong admiration of her.

She forgave the man his impertinence and smiled as she thought of his abrupt departure. If he were really a night bird he would surely have stood his ground. He would not have been got rid of so easily.

She was glad she had had a thick veil on. If later she made acquaintance with this man, she did not wish him to know that she and the girl who had offered him a shilling were one and the same. If he knew she might be at a certain disadvantage with him.

She turned into Soho and was immediately conscious of a slightly different atmosphere. There were fewer people about and the street was not so brightly lighted, or at any rate seemed to her darker. She heard voices speaking Italian in the shadows. The lights of small restaurants glimmered faintly on the bone dry pavement. She was nearing the *Bella Napoli*. Soon she heard the distant sound of guitars.

Where she was walking at this moment there was no one. She stood still for an instant considering. If Lady Sellingworth and Craven were really dining together, as she suspected, and at the *Bella Napoli*, she could see them from the street if they had a table near the window. If they were not seated near the window she would not be able to see them. In that case what was she going to do?

After a moment's thought she resolved that if she did not see them from the street she would go into the restaurant and dine there alone. They would see her of course, if they were there, and would no doubt be surprised and decidedly uncomfortable. But that could not be helped. Having come so far she was

determined not to go back to the hotel without making sure whether her suspicion was correct. If, on the other hand, they were dining at a table near the window she resolved not to enter. Having come to this decision she walked on.

She came up to the restaurant. The window was lighted up brilliantly. No blind was drawn over it. There was opaque glass at the bottom but not at the top. She was tall and could look through the glass at the top. She did so, and at once saw



Lady Sellingworth and Craven.

They were sitting at her table, the table which was always reserved for her when she dined at the *Bella Napoli*, and at which she had entertained Lady Sellingworth; and they were talking—confidentially, eagerly, she thought. Lady Sellingworth looked unusually happy and animated, even perhaps a little younger than usual. Yes, very old, but younger than usual! They were not eating at the moment, but were no doubt waiting for a course. Craven was leaning forward to his companion. The guitars still sounded. But these two had apparently so much to say to

each other that they had neither time nor inclination to listen to the music.

Miss Van Tuyn stood very still on the pavement staring into the restaurant.

But suddenly Craven, as if attracted by something, turned abruptly half round towards the window. Instantly Miss Van Tuyn moved away. He could not have seen her. But perhaps he had felt that she—or rather of course that some one—was there. For he could not possibly have felt that she, Beryl Van Tuyn, was there looking in.

After drawing back Miss Van Tuyn walked slowly away. She was considering something, debating something, within herself. Should she go in and dine alone in the restaurant? By doing so she would certainly make those two who had treated her badly uncomfortable; she would probably spoil the rest of their evening. Should she do that? Some indelicate devil prompted her, urged her, to do it. It would serve them right, she thought. Adela

Sellingworth especially deserved a touch of the whip. But it would be an undignified thing to do. They would never know of course why she had come alone to the *Bella Napoli*! They would think that, being auda-

ciously unconventional, she had just drifted in there because she had nothing else to do, as Craven had drifted in alone the other night. She wanted to do it. Yet she hesitated to do it.

Finally she gave up the idea. She felt malicious, but she could not quite make up her mind to dine alone where they would see her. Probably they would feel obliged to ask her to join them. But she would not join them. Nothing could induce her to do that. And was she to come over to them when coffee was brought, as Craven had done at her invitation? No; that would be a condescension unworthy of her beauty and youth. Her fierce vanity forbade it even though her feeling of malice told her to do it.

Her vanity won. She walked on and came into Shaftesbury Avenue.

"I know what I'll do," she said to herself. "I'll go and dine upstairs at the Café Royal and go into the café downstairs afterwards. Dick is certain to be there."

Dick—and others!

This time she obeyed her inclination. (Continued on page 94)



"Here's a shilling! I'm sorry I can't afford more than that." For the first time she looked at her pursuer, and met the brown eyes of "the living bronze."



And in this silence once more came a cry—a cry which Jolly Roger could no longer disbelieve, and

"We've got 'em beat," exulted Jolly Roger McKay. "We're free at last, Pied-Bot—and not a Royal Mountie within a million miles of us."

A Whisper

Illustrations by
Walt Louderback

WITH November came the first chill whisperings of an early winter through the Northland. Autumn was dying, or dead. The last of the red ash berries hung shriveled and frost-bitten on naked twigs, freezing nights were nipping the face of the earth, the voices of the wilderness were filled with a new note and the winds held warning for every man and beast between Hudson's Bay and the Great Slave and from the Height of Land to the Arctic sea. Seven years before there had come such a winter, and the land had not forgotten it—a winter sudden and swift, deadly in its unexpectedness, terrific in its cold, bringing with it such famine and death as the Northland had not known for two generations.

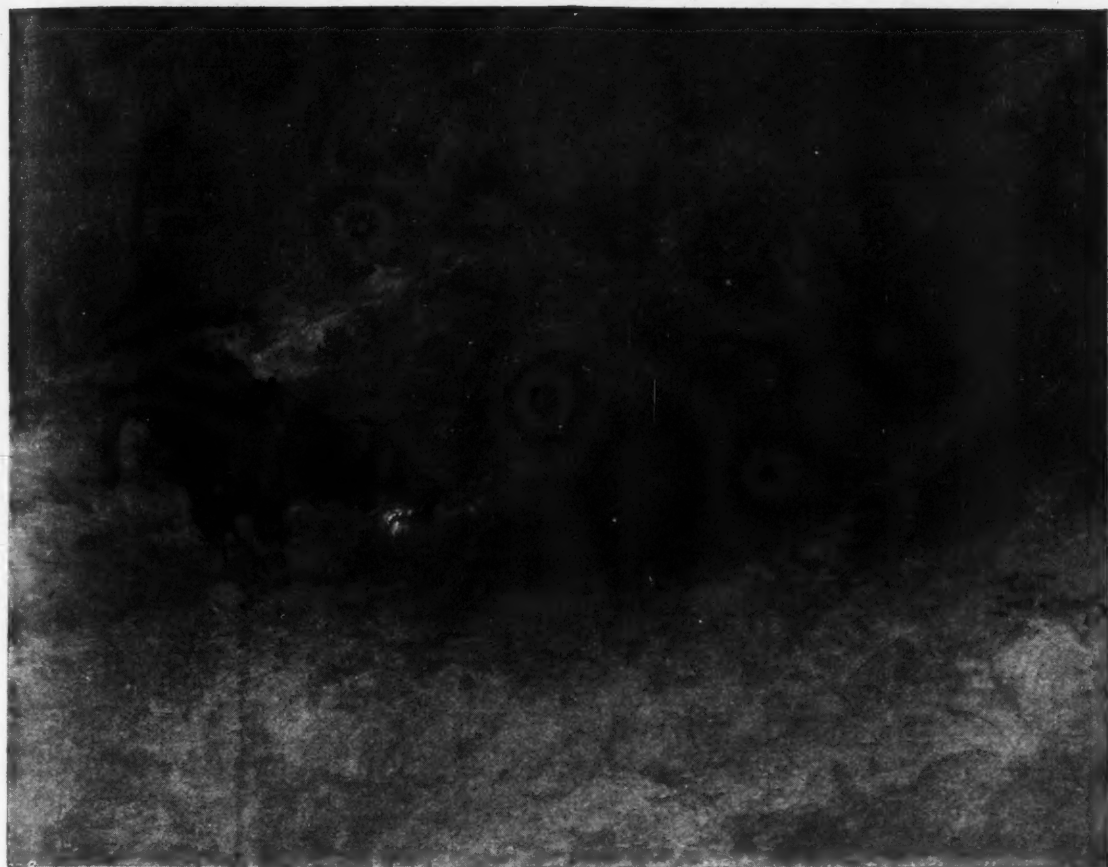
But this year there was premonition. Omen of it came with the first wailing night winds that bore the smell of icebergs from over the black forests north and west. The moon came up red, and it went down red, and the sun came up red in the morning. The loon's call died a month ahead of its time. The wild geese drove steadily south when they should have been feeding from the Kogatuk to Baffin's Bay; and the beaver built his walls thick, and anchored his alders and his willows deep so that he would not starve when the ice grew heavy. East, west, north and south, in forest and swamp, in the trapper's cabin and the wolf's hiding place, was warning of it. Gray rabbits turned white. Moose and caribou began to herd. The foxes yipped shrilly in the night, and a new hunger and a new thrill sent the wolves hunting in pack, while the gray geese still streaked southward under the red moon overhead.

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And then it came. In the still darkness of a single night, when there was scarce a moaning in the tree tops, the Northland turned white. Close after the first snow came the intense cold, and on the heels of this followed those weeks and months of terrific storm which will long be remembered by the wilderness people as that Red Winter of hardship and death when the Sarcees died to a man, woman and child over on the Dubawnt waterways, and when trees froze solid and split open with the sharp explosions of high-power guns.

In January came the Black Storm. It was then that the Sarcees died. It was in this storm that all furred and feathered life and all hoof and horn along the edge of the Barren Lands from Aberdeen Lake to the Coppermine was swallowed up. It was in these days that streams froze solid, and the man who was cautious fastened a *babiche* rope about his waist when he went forth from his cabin for wood, so that his wife might help to pull and guide him back through that blinding avalanche of wind and freezing fury that for five days and five nights held a twisted and broken world in its grip.

It was in the Barren Land country west of Artillery Lake and south of the Thelon River that Jolly Roger McKay, the outlaw, and Peter, his dog, were caught in the big storm. Jolly Roger was making for the cabin which he had built in a finger of scrub timber that reached out into the Barren sixty miles away when necessity compelled him to "dig in." He was in that part of the country where the biggest stick of wood that thrust itself up out of



close upon the cry the report of a rifle. Again he could have sworn the voice was a woman's voice.

in the Night

by JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

*—but the Royal Mounted Police
give Jolly Roger—and you—a sur-
prise in this enthralling story of
“The Country Beyond.”*

the snow was no thicker than his thumb; a country of green grass and succulent moss on which the caribou fed in season, but a hell on earth when arctic storm howled and screamed across it in winter. Piled up against a mass of rock Jolly Roger had found a huge snow drift. This drift was as long as a church and half as high, with its outer shell blistered and battered to the hardness of rock by wind and sleet. Through this shell he cut a small door with his knife, and after that dug out the soft snow from within until he had a room half as big as his cabin, and so snug and warm after a little with the body heat of himself and Peter that he could throw off the thick coat which he wore.

For Peter it was a new experience. He could not remember the tail end of his first winter, a year ago; but he did remember Cragg's Ridge and its green meadows, its blue violets and red strawberries—and Nada. He remembered, dimly, the cabin in the edge of the swamp a thousand miles south, where he and his master had hidden from the law—and the Stew Kettle, with its broiling rocks, and Jed Hawkins, and the black trail that led out through the forest from Nada's cabin. But most vivid in his memories were Yellow Bird, and little Sun Cloud, and the red-headed man whom his master had shot on the sands of Wollaston. One thrill after another had made up his life, the passing adventure of following at the heels of a beloved master who was to be hung by the neck until he was dead if caught by the men who were hunting him. But greatest of all, and obliterating all the others, was the thrill of the Big Storm.

To Peter, in the first night of this storm, it seemed as though

all the people in the world were shrieking and wailing and sobbing in the blackness outside. Jolly Roger sat smoking his pipe at intervals in the gloom, though there was little pleasure in smoking a pipe in darkness. The storm did not oppress him, but filled him with an odd sense of security and comfort. The wind shrieked and lashed itself about his snow dune, but it could not get at him. Its mightiest efforts to destroy only beat more snow upon him, and made him safer and warmer. In a way, there was something of humor as well as tragedy in its wild frenzy, and Peter heard him laugh softly in the darkness. More and more frequently he had heard that laugh since those warm days of autumn when they had last met the red-headed man, Terence Cassidy, of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, and his master had shot him on the white shore of Wollaston.

“You see,” said McKay, caressing Peter's hairy neck in the gloom. “Everything is turning out right for us, and I'm beginning to believe more and more what Yellow Bird told us, and that in the end we're going to be happy—somewhere—with Nada. What do you think, Pied-Bot? Shall we take a chance, and go back to Cragg's Ridge in the spring?”

Peter wriggled himself in answer, as a wild shriek of the wind wailed over the huge snow dune.

Jolly Roger's fingers tightened at Peter's neck.

“Well, we're going,” he said, as though he was telling Peter something new. “I'm believing Yellow Bird, Pied-Bot. I'm believing her—now. What she told us was more than fortune-telling. It wasn't just Indian sorcery. When she shut herself up

A Whisper in the Night

and starved for those three days and nights in her little conjuror's house, just for you and me—*something happened*. Didn't it? Wouldn't you say something happened?"

Peter swallowed and his teeth clicked as he gave evidence of understanding.

"She told us a lot of truth," went on Jolly Roger, with deep faith in his voice. "And we must believe, Pied-Bot. She told us Cassidy was coming after us, and he came. She said the spirits promised her the law would never get us, and we thought it looked bad when Cassidy had us covered with his gun on the shore at Wollaston. But something more than luck was with us, and we shot him. Then we brought him back to life and lugged him to a cabin, and the little stranger girl took him, and nursed him, and Cassidy fell in love with her—and married her. So Yellow Bird was right again, Pied-Bot. We've got to believe her. And she says everything is coming out right for us, and that we are going back to Nada, and be happy—"

Jolly Roger's pipe-bowl glowed in the blackness.

"I'm going to light the alcohol lamp," he said. "We can't sleep. And I want a good smoke. It isn't fun when you can't see the smoke. Too bad God forgot to make you so you could use a pipe, Peter. You don't know what you are missing—in times like these."

He fumbled in his pack and found the alcohol lamp, which was fresh filled, and screwed tight. Peter heard him working for a moment in the darkness. Then he struck a match, and the yellow flare of it lighted up his face. In his joy Peter whined. It was good to see his master. And then, in another moment, the little lamp was filling their white-walled refuge with a mellow glow. Jolly Roger's eyes, coming suddenly out of darkness, were wide and staring. His face was covered with a scrub beard. But there was something of cheer about him even in this night of terror outside, and when he had driven his snowshoe into the snow wall, and had placed the lamp on it, he grinned companionably at Peter.

Then, with a deep breath of satisfaction, he puffed out clouds of smoke from his pipe, and stood up to look about their room.

"Not so bad, is it?" he asked. "We could have a big house here if we wanted to dig out the rooms—eh, Peter? Parlors, and bedrooms, and a library—and not one of His Majesty's policemen within a million miles of us. That's the nice part of it, Pied-Bot—none of the Royal Mounties to trouble us. They would never think of looking for us in the heart of a big snow dune out in this God-forsaken Barren, would they?"

The thought was a pleasing one to Jolly Roger. He spread out his blankets on the snow floor, and sat down on them, facing Peter.

"We've got 'em beat," he said, a chuckling note of pride in his voice. "The world is small when it comes to hiding, Pied-Bot, but all the people in it couldn't find us here—not in a million years. If we could only find a place as safe as this—where a girl could live—and had Nada with us—"

Many times during the past few weeks Peter had seen the light that flamed up now in his master's eyes. That, and the strange thrill in Jolly Roger's voice, stirred him more than the words to which he listened, and tried to understand.

"And we're going to," finished McKay, almost fiercely, his hands clenching as he leaned toward Peter. "We have made a big mistake, Pied-Bot, and it has taken us a long time to see it. It will be hard for us to leave our North Country, but that is what we must do. Maybe Yellow Bird's good spirits meant that when

they said we would find happiness with Nada in a place called The Country Beyond. There are a lot of 'Countries Beyond,' Peter, and as soon as the spring break-up comes and we can travel without leaving trails behind us we will go back to Cragg's Ridge and get Nada, and hit for some place where the law won't expect to find us. There's China, for instance. A lot of yellow people. But what do we care for color as long as we have *her* with us? I say—"

Suddenly he stopped. And Peter's body grew tense. Both faced the round hole, half filled with softly packed snow, which McKay had cut as a door into the heart of the big drift. They had grown accustomed to the tumult of the storm. Its strange wailings and the shrieking voices which at times seemed borne in the moaning sweep of it no longer sent shivers of apprehension through Peter. But in that moment when both turned to listen there came a sound which was not like the other sounds they had heard. It was a voice—not one of the phantom voices of the screaming wind, but a voice so real and so near that for a beat or two even Jolly Roger McKay's heart stood still. It was as if a man standing just beyond their snow barricade had shouted a name. But there came no second call. The wind lulled, so that for a space there was stillness outside.

Jolly Roger laughed a little uneasily.

"Good thing we don't believe in ghosts, Peter, or we would swear it was a *Loup-Garou* smelling us through the wall!" He thumbed the tobacco down in his pipe, and nodded. "Then—there is South America," he said. "They have everything down there—the biggest rivers in the world, the biggest mountains, and so much room that even a *Loup-Garou* couldn't hunt us out. She will love it, Pied-Bot. But if it happens she likes Africa better, or Australia, or the South Sea— Now, what the devil was that?"

Peter had jumped as if stung, and for a moment Jolly Roger sat tense as a carven Indian. Then he rose to his feet, a look of perplexity and doubt in his eyes.

"What was it, Peter? Can the wind shoot a gun—like *that*?"

Peter was sniffing at the loosely blocked door of their snow room. A whimper rose in his throat. He looked up at Jolly Roger, his eyes glowing fiercely through the mass of airedale whiskers that covered his face. He wanted to dig. He wanted to plunge out into the howling darkness. Slowly McKay beat the ash out of his pipe and placed the pipe in his pocket.

"We'll take a look," he said, something repressive in his voice. "But it isn't reasonable, Peter. It is the wind. There couldn't be a man out there, and it wasn't a rifle we heard. It is the wind—with the devil himself behind it!"

With a few sweeps of his hands and arms he scooped out the loose snow from the hole. The opening was on the sheltered side of the drift, and only the whirling eddies of the storm swept about him as he thrust out his head and shoulders. But over him it was rushing like an avalanche. He could hear nothing but the moaning advance of it. And he could see nothing. He held out his hand before his face, and blackness swallowed it.

"We have been chased so much that we're what you might call super-sensitive," he said pulling himself back and nodding at Peter in the gray light of the alcohol lamp. "Guess we'd better turn in, boy. This is a good place to sleep—plenty of fresh air, no mosquitoes or black flies, and the police so far away that we will soon forget how they look. If you say so we will have a nip of cold tea and a bite—"

He did not finish. For a moment the wind had lessened in



Rita Weiman

Having introduced this young short-story writer and playwright to you in this issue with "Grease-Paint," we want you to know that you will see more of her work in this magazine—notably "To Whom It May Concern," another story that, in its way, is as illuminating in its reflection on life as the one which appears this month. It is the story of a butterfly's soul, and it will pull at your heart as few stories have done.



"I thank you for what you have done," she said, "but the law—and Breault—they have no mercy."

fury, as if gathering a deeper breath. And what he heard drew a cry from him this time, and a sharper whine from Peter. Out of the blackness of the night had come a woman's voice! In that first instant of shock and amazement he would have staked his life that what he had heard was not a mad outcry of the night or an illusion of his brain. It was clear—distinct—a woman's voice coming from out on the Barren, rising above the storm in an agony of appeal, and dying out quickly until it became a part of the moaning wind. And then, with equal force, came the absurdity of it to McKay. A woman! He swallowed the lump

that had risen in his throat, and tried to laugh. A woman—out in that storm—a thousand miles from nowhere! It was inconceivable.

The laugh which he forced from his lips was husky and unreal, and there was a smothering grip of something at his heart. In the ghostly light of the alcohol lamp his eyes were wide open and staring.

He looked at Peter. The dog stood stiff-legged before the hole. His body was trembling.

"Peter!"

A Whisper in the Night

With a responsive wag of his tail Peter turned his bristling face up to his master. Many times Jolly Roger had seen that unflinching warning in his comrade's eyes. *There was some one outside—or Peter's brain, like his own, was twisted and fooled by the storm!*

Against his reasoning—in the face of the absurdity of it—Jolly Roger was urged into action. He changed the snowshoe and replaced the alcohol lamp so that the glow of the light could be seen more clearly from the Barren. Then he went to the hole and crawled through. Peter followed him.

As if infuriated by their audacity, the storm lashed itself over the top of the dune. They could hear the hissing whine of fine, hard snow tearing above their heads like volleys of shot, and the force of the wind reached them even in their shelter, bringing with it the flinty sting of the snow-dust. Beyond them the black barren was filled with a dismal moaning. Looking up, and yet seeing nothing in the darkness, Peter understood where the weird shriekings and ghostly cries came from. It was the wind whipping itself up the side and over the top of the dune.

Jolly Roger listened, hearing only the convulsive sweep of that mighty force over a thousand miles of barren. And then came again one of those brief intervals when the storm seemed to rest for a moment, and its moaning grew less and less, until it was like the sound of giant chariot wheels receding swiftly over the face of the earth. Then came the silence—a few seconds of it—while in the north gathered swiftly the whispering rumble of a still greater force.

And in this silence came once more a cry—a cry which Jolly Roger McKay could no longer disbelieve, and close upon the cry the report of a rifle. Again he could have sworn the voice was a woman's voice. As nearly as he could judge it came from dead ahead, out of the chaos of blackness, and in that direction he shouted an answer. Then he ran out into the darkness, followed by Peter. Another avalanche of wind gathered at their heels, driving them on like the crest of a flood. In the first force of it Jolly Roger stumbled and fell to his knees,

ilization? He began to shout her name. "Nada—Nada—Nada!" And hidden in the gloom at his side Peter barked.

Storm and darkness swallowed them. The last faint gleam of the alcohol lamp died out. Jolly Roger did not look back. Blindly he stumbled ahead, counting his footsteps as he went, and shouting Nada's name. Twice he thought he heard a reply, and each time the will-o'-the-wisp voice seemed to be still farther ahead of him. Then, with a fiercer blast of the wind beating upon his back, he stumbled and fell forward upon his face. His hand reached out and touched the thing that had tripped him. It was not snow. His naked fingers clutched in something soft and furry. It was a man's coat. He could feel buttons, a belt, and the sudden thrill of a bearded face.

He stood up. The wind was wailing off over the barren again, leaving an instant of stillness about him. And he shouted:

"Nada—Nada—Nada!"

An answer came so quickly that it startled him, not one voice, but two—three—and one of them the shrill, agonized cry of a woman. They came toward him as he continued to shout, until a few feet away he could make out a gray blur moving through the gloom. He went to it, staggering under the weight of the



and in that moment he saw very faintly the glow of his light at the opening in the snow dune. A realization of his deadly peril if he lost sight of the light flashed upon him. Again and again he called into the night. After that, bowing his head in the fury of the storm, he plunged on deeper into darkness.

A sudden wild thought seized upon his soul and thrilled him into forgetfulness of the light and the snow dune and his own safety. In the heart of this mad world he had heard a voice. He no longer doubted. And the voice was a woman's voice! Could it be Nada? Was it possible she had followed him after his flight, determined to find him, and share his fate? His heart pounded. Who else, of all the women in the world, could be following his trail across the Barrens—a thousand miles from civ-

man he had found in the snow. The blur was made up of two men dragging a sledge, and behind the sledge was a third figure, moaning in the darkness.

"I found some one in the snow," Jolly Roger shouted. "Here he is—"

He dropped his burden, and the last of his words were twisted by a fresh blast of the storm. But the figure behind the sledge had heard, and Jolly Roger saw her indistinctly at his feet, shielding the man he had found with her arms and body, and crying out a name which he could not understand in that howling of the wind. But a thing like cold steel sank into his heart, and

he knew it was not Nada he had found this night on the Barren. He placed the unconscious man on the sledge, believing he was dead. The girl was crying out something to him, unintelligible in the storm, and one of the men shouted in a thick, throaty voice which he could not understand. Jolly Roger felt the weight of him as he staggered in the wind, fighting to keep

One at a time McKay helped to drag them through the hole which he used for a door. For a space his vision was blurred, and he saw through a hazy film of storm-blindness the gray faces and heavily coated forms of those he had rescued. The man he had found in the snow he placed on his blankets, and the girl fell down upon her knees beside him. It was then Jolly Roger began to see more clearly. And in that same instant came a shock as unexpected as the smash of dynamite under his feet.

The girl had thrown back her parkee, and was sobbing over the man on the blankets, and calling him father. She was not like Nada. Her hair was in thick, dark coils, and she was older. She was not pretty—now. Her face was twisted by the brutal beating of the storm, and her eyes were nearly closed. But it was the man Jolly Roger stared at, while his heart choked inside him. He was grizzled and gray-bearded, with military mustaches and a bald head. He was not dead. His eyes were open, and his blue lips were struggling to speak to the girl whose blindness kept her from seeing that he was alive. And the coat which he wore was the regulation service garment of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police!

Slowly McKay turned, wiping the film of snow-sweat from his eyes, and stared at the other two. One of them had sunk down with his back to the snow wall. He was a much younger man, possibly not over thirty, and his face was ghastly. The third lay where he had fallen from exhaustion after crawling through the hole. Both wore service coats, with holsters at their sides.

The man against the snow wall was making an effort to rise. He sagged back, and grinned up apologetically at McKay.

"Dam' fine of you, old man," he mumbled between blistered lips. "I'm Porter—'N' Division—taking Superintendent Tavish to Fort Churchill—Tavish and his daughter. Made a hell of a mess of it, haven't I?"

He struggled to his knees.

"There's brandy in our kit. It might help—over there," and he nodded toward the girl and the gray-bearded man on the blankets.

Porter was sitting up, close to the girl, and Jolly Roger knew he was whispering to her the exciting secret of his own identity.

his feet, and he knew he was ready to drop down in the snow and die.

"It's only a step," he shouted. "Can you make it?"

His words reached the ears of the others. The girl swayed through the darkness and gripped his arm. The two men began to tug at the sledge, and Jolly Roger seized the rope between them, wondering why there were no dogs, and faced the driving force of the storm. It seemed an interminable time before he saw the faint glow of the alcohol lamp. The last fifty feet was like struggling against an irresistible hail from machine guns. Then came the shelter of the dune.

Jolly Roger did not answer, but crawled through the hole and found the sledge in the outer darkness. He heard Peter coming after him, and he saw Porter's bloodless face in the illumination of the alcohol lamp, where he waited to help him with the dunnage. In those seconds he fought to get a grip on himself. A quarter of an hour ago he had laughed at the thought of the law. Never had it seemed to be so far away from him, and never had he been more utterly isolated from the world. His mind was still a bit dazed by the thing that had happened. The police had not trailed him. They had not ferreted him out, nor had they stumbled upon him by accident. It was he who had gone out into the

A Whisper in the Night

night and deliberately dragged them in! Of all the trickery fate had played upon him this was the least to be expected.

His mind began to work more swiftly as in darkness he cut the *babiche* cordage that bound the patrol dunnage to the sledge. "N" Division, he told himself, was away over in the Athabasca country. He had never heard of Porter, nor of Superintendent Tavish, and inasmuch as the outfit was evidently a special escort to Fort Churchill, it was very likely that Porter and his companions would not be thinking of outlaws, and especially of Jolly Roger McKay. This was his one chance. To attempt an escape through the blizzard was not only a desperate hazard. It was death.

There were only two packs on the sledge, and these he passed through the hole to Porter. A few moments later he was holding a flask of liquor to the lips of the gray-bearded man, while the girl looked at him with eyes that were widening as the snow-sting left them. Tavish gulped, and his mittened hand closed on the girl's arm.

"I'm all right, Jo," he mumbled. "All right—"

His eyes met McKay's, and then took in the snow walls of the dug-out. They were deep, piercing eyes, overhung by shaggy brows. Jolly Roger felt the intentness of their gaze as he gave the girl a swallow of the brandy, and then passed the flask to Porter.

"You have saved our lives," said Tavish, in a voice that was clearer. "I don't just understand how it happened. I remember stumbling in the darkness, and being unable to rise. I was behind the sledge. Porter and Breault were dragging it, and Josephine, my daughter, was sheltered under the blankets. After that—"

He paused, and Jolly Roger explained how it all had come about. He pointed to Peter. It was the dog, he said. Peter had insisted there was some one outside, and they had taken a chance by going in search of him. He was John Cummings, a fox trapper, and the storm had caught him fifty miles from his cabin. He was traveling without a dog sledge, and had only a pack-outfit.

Breault, the third man, had regained his wind, and was listening to him. One look at his dark, thin face told McKay that he was the wilderness man of the three. He was staring at Jolly Roger in a strange sort of way. And then, as if catching himself, he nodded, and began rubbing his frosted face with handfuls of snow.

Porter had thrown off his heavy coat, and was unpacking one of the dunnage sacks. He and the girl seemed to have suffered less than the other two. Jo, the girl, was looking at him. And then her eyes turned to Jolly Roger. They were large, fine eyes, wide open and clear now. There was something of splendid strength about her as she smiled at McKay. She was not of the hysterical sort. He could see that.

"If we could have some hot soup," she suggested. "May we?"

There was gratitude in her eyes, which she made no attempt to express in words. Jolly Roger liked her. And Peter crept up behind her, and watched her as she followed Breault's example, and rubbed the cheeks of the bearded man with snow.

"There's an alcohol stove in the other pack," said Breault, with his hard, narrow eyes fixed steadily on Jolly Roger's face. "By the way, what did you say your name was?"

"Cummings—John Cummings."

Breault made no answer. During the next half hour Jolly Roger felt stealing over him a growing sense of uneasiness. They drank soup and ate bannock. It grew warm, and the girl threw off the heavy fur garment that enveloped her. Color returned into her cheeks. Her eyes were bright, and in her voice was a tremble of happiness at finding warmth and life where she had expected death. Porter's friendliness was almost brotherly. He explained what had happened. Two rascally Chippewyans had deserted them, stealing off into darkness and storm with both dog teams and one of their sledges. After that they had fought on, seeking for a drift into which they might dig a refuge. But the Barren was as smooth as a table. They had shouted, and Miss Tavish had screamed—not because they expected to find assistance—but on account of Tavish falling in the storm, and losing himself. It was quite a joke, Porter thought, that Superintendent Tavish, one of the iron men of the service, should have given up the ghost so easily.

Tavish smiled grimly. They were all in good humor, and happy, with the possible exception of Breault. Not once did he laugh or smile. Yet Jolly Roger noted that each time he spoke the others were specially attentive. There was something repressive and mysterious about the man, and the girl would cut herself short in the middle of a laugh if he happened to speak, and the softness of her mouth would harden in an instant. He understood the significance of her gladness, and of Porter's, for twice he saw their hands come together, and their fingers entwine. And in their eyes was something which they could not hide

when they looked at each other. But Breault puzzled him. He did not know that Breault was the best man-hunter in "N" Division, which reached from Athabasca Landing to the Arctic ocean, or that up and down the two thousand mile stretch of the Three River Country he was known as *Shingoos*, the Ferret.

The girl fell asleep first that night, with her cheek on her father's shoulder. Tavish rested his lips against her soft hair and closed his own eyes. Breault, the Ferret, rolled himself in a blanket, and breathed deeply. Porter still smoked his pipe, and looked wistfully at the softly glowing hair and pale face of Josephine Tavish. He smiled a bit proudly at McKay.

"She's mine," he whispered. "We're going to be married."

Jolly Roger wanted to reach over and grip his hand.

He nodded, a little lump coming in his throat.

"I know how you feel," he said. "When I heard her calling out there—it made me think—of a girl down south."

"Down south?" queried Porter. "Why down south—if you care for her—and you up here?"

McKay shrugged his shoulders. He said too much. Neither he nor Porter knew that Breault's eyes were half open, and that he was listening.

Jolly Roger held up a hand, as if something in the wailing of the storm had caught his attention.

"We'll have two or three days of this. Better turn in, Porter. I'm going to dig out another room—for Miss Tavish. I'm afraid she'll need the convenience of a private room before we're able to move. It's an easy job—and passes the time away."

"I'll help," offered Porter.

For an hour they worked, using McKay's snowshoes as shovels. During that hour Breault did not close his eyes. A curious smile curled his thin lips as he watched Jolly Roger. And when at last Porter turned in and slept, the Ferret sat up and stretched himself. McKay had finished his room, and was beginning a tunnel which would lead as a back door out of the drift, when Breault came in and picked up the snowshoe which Porter had used.

"I'll take my turn," he said. "I'm a bit nervous, and not at all sleepy, Cummings." He began digging into the snow. "Been long in this country?" he asked.

"Three winters. It's a good red fox country, with now and then a silver and a black."

Breault grunted.

"You must have met Cassidy, then," he said casually, without looking at McKay. "Corporal Terence Cassidy. This is his country."

Jolly Roger did not look up from his work of digging.

"Yes, I know him. Met him last winter. Red-headed. A nice chap. I liked him. You know him?"

"Entered the service together," said Breault. "But he's unlucky. For two or three years he has been on the trail of a man named McKay. Jolly Roger, they call him—Jolly Roger McKay. Ever hear of him?"

Jolly Roger nodded.

"Cassidy told me about him when he was at my cabin. From what I've heard I—rather like him."

"Who—Cassidy, or Jolly Roger?"

"Both."

For the first time the Ferret leveled his eyes at his companion. They were mystifying eyes, never appearing to open fully, but remaining half closed as if to conceal whatever thought might lie behind them. McKay felt their penetration. It was like a cold chill entering into him, warning him of a menace deadlier than the storm.

"Haven't any idea where one might come upon this Jolly Roger, have you?"

"No."

"You see, he thinks he killed a man down south. Well, he didn't. The man lived. If you happen to see him at any time give him that information, will you?"

Jolly Roger thrust his head and shoulders in the growing tunnel.

"Yes, I will."

He knew Breault was lying. And also knew that back of the narrow slits of Breault's eyes was the cunning of a fox.

"You might also tell him the law has a mind to forgive him for sticking up that free trader's post a few years ago."

Jolly Roger turned with his snowshoe piled high with a load of snow.

"I'll tell him that, too," he said, chuckling at the obviousness of the other's trap. "What do you think my cabin is, Breault—a Rest for Homeless Outlaws?"

Breault grinned. It was an odd sort of grin, and Jolly Roger caught it over his shoulder. When he (Continued on page 106)



Photographic Illustrations by Lejaren A. Hiller

Elinor Glyn says—

You *Americans* Are Making Beasts of Yourselves

AS the months go by I seem to realize that it is a mad world we live in now. Long ago in my study of Roman history, especially the lives of the Cæsars, I used to wonder if it were possible that human beings could be so depraved, if society, at any period, could have been so corrupt. I used to feel that perhaps historians had given added color to their reports—but now I have no doubt that they have chronicled the truth, for things in our own day are becoming quite as bad.

War does not seem to have taught any lesson—on the contrary it seems to have let loose every evil passion, so that there is an orgy of license. Whether the pendulum will swing back again in our time is problematic and depends upon the public spirited attempt of individuals.

In my two former articles I wrote of the young girls' behavior and the parents' lack of a sense of responsibility. I could have cited many more cases to prove my points, and since then many more have been brought to my notice.

The head physician of a certain fashionable sanatorium told me, for instance, that whereas formerly his patients were elderly women with worn out nerves, numbers of his clients are now girls of fifteen to twenty-five, who are dope fiends or who are recovering from alcoholic poisoning or other horrors too hideous to mention. And nothing seems to be done about it. There appears to be the "After me the deluge!" sort of feeling. It is terrifying when one comes to think about it. It may be quite as bad in Europe. I have not been there for eleven months, but there are two or three reasons why a general spirit of decadence should have more chance to flourish in this country than in any other.

The first is because everyone in every grade of society is so much richer here than anywhere else. Thus there are more chances for indulgence. The second is that there is not so much tradition to influence the subconscious mind, or suggest to it restraint. And the third is the cause of the augmentation of

one of the vital roots of abstract decadence—and this third is the youth of the nation!

All youth is insubordinate; you have only to announce a peremptory law to youth and it instantly rebels. If it cannot openly oppose its law-giver it takes delight in defying him secretly under his nose. Youth will go through any peril to obtain something it does not really want provided it has been arbitrarily forbidden it in an arbitrary fashion. A large part of the American nation is angry that prohibition laws were passed when it was fighting in France, and so a spirit of rebellion has been aroused and it is inclined to behave as the schoolboy does and disobey regulations without stopping to reason out whether the law is right or wrong. It cuts off its nose to spite its face, just as children do. And as I am sure every sensible person will agree with me that excessive drinking is at the root of most of the other objectionable features of the present day, I shall hope to enlist your sympathy in what I am going to say—and in what I am going to suggest as a remedy.

America has hideously changed in respect to drunkenness in society in the thirteen years since I first saw it. As a looker-on I am appalled, horrified, at what I see and hear. Just judged as nations there may be others in the world more drunken, but there is no other civilized country—now that Russia is no more—where to be drunk in society is *not* considered a disgrace. In France or England in decent company, if a man was drunk once at a party it might be thought a regrettable incident, but if he was seen drunk at two or three parties he would never be asked out again, and would have to sink to a lower level of acquaintances. And if a woman or girl were seen drunk—it would be considered an everlasting disgrace for her. I always think America ought to be the example for other nations, because she has no hampering old traditions, no acknowledged privileged class who are exempt from criticism, and yet here in one of the most vital influences for society America is lagging behind!

Many apparent ladies and gentlemen of America, and by this



It is this palliation, this "overlooking" which encourages a weakness which will become a frightful stain upon this nation if the social leaders do not arise to a sense of their duties and a realization of their power to stop it.

term I mean social leaders in various towns, just laugh at their members being drunk, and put no ban upon them. And that is the pith of the whole matter I want to talk about—the *point of view* held upon the horrible subject of drunkenness.

As long as there are human beings upon earth they will crave something which will excite their imaginations, loosen inhibitions, make them light-hearted and forgetful of worries. The temptation to drink alcohol will be ever present; and with the present general want of individual discipline, no law passed by the State will have much effect. Only one thing could help in society, and that is the unwritten law of good taste and refinement. If the leaders of the societies of the great cities and the small towns, the fashionable social heads, not the goody-goody faddists, were to decree that no intoxication would be tolerated and no individual indulging in over-drinking would be accepted—in the space of a year or two drunkenness among the richer classes would be an unknown quantity and the example would permeate all grades. But as it is, the hideous subject is looked upon with almost amused complacency.

It seems almost unnecessary for me to go into the state of things which exists, because everyone who goes out into any grade of so-called society must be aware of the ugliness, but I intend to, because sometimes things seen in print have greater effect than any preaching or spoken word. I don't want to preach, I only want to ask why American men and women like to go on being such appalling fools as to let a thing like this insidiously undermine the vitality and morals of their coming generations, and go on doing a thing which as the lady in *Punch* said is "worse than wicked—it is vulgar." Could anything be more vulgar and disgusting than a drunken man? Or anything more sickeningly revolting than a drunken woman? While an intoxicated girl is a sacrilege! And yet these sights are to be seen with more and more frequency.

A Frenchwoman visiting here came to me simply appalled at what she had seen. "We have absinthe and even drugs

—we have champagne and wines—we may have bad morals, perhaps, but at least we do not make beasts of ourselves, for the young people to have a bad example always before their eyes! Think of it, Madame! At a chic party last week the young girls even were drunk! One beauty had to come from the room with a friend, and was *sick*. Yes, Madame, she vomit in the hall! All over her beautiful dress! And ze next day she was not finished—*déclassée—pas du tout!* Ze rest said only: 'Poor Alice, she can't carry her load!' It could happen but once in Paris and no husband for that girl!"

A well-known matron at another party began fondling a perfect stranger next to her, while her loud laughter shook the room and she had to be coaxed to go home by a hardly less intoxicated husband! Then there are numbers of dear, charming women, who loathe it all who have to witness their husbands becoming fuddled or maudlin, or offering incredibly foolish flattery to whomever they talk. They have the agony of having to go home with these beasts—yes, these *beasts*—with an apology to the animal kingdom. Poor broken-hearted women—or rather broken-spirited—for if they had spirit, they would uprise in a band and put social ostracism upon these weaklings, and the evil would stop.

In the eighteenth century, people in society got drunk—but we are not in the eighteenth century; surely we have advanced since then. Because the great-great-grandparents of the present generation indulged is no excuse for us. They also went without baths and took snuff! I went to a party not long ago for a distinguished Russian; a certain prince was to lecture upon the revolution. It was quite a small party of what was supposed to be the élite of the place, which shall be nameless. The hostess appeared nervous—the host had a vacant stare and in about half an hour, disappeared from the room—and the whole company heard him singing riotously in the next room and smashing the furniture! The hostess carried out her duties with an agonized calm, and frequent absences, and no one

seemed very much upset but myself! "Poor Mary—it is horrid for her!" one really nice woman said. "This occurs every time she attempts to have a party—we may be thankful he did not burst in!" My only thought was that I should have died of shame, had it been my house.

I am not out to praise prohibition or to blame it. Statistics will speak for themselves in a year or two. I am only out to try and arouse the disgust I myself feel at the excessive use of drinks in society.

Supposing that all the young and charming débutantes determined not to dance with, or speak to, a young man who was the least under the influence of liquor; how very soon it would become the fashion for the boys not to drink. Supposing all the young men showed disgust and revulsion if they saw a woman or girl the least intoxicated; do you think for a moment the sight would ever continue? Of course not! Drunkenness should not be accepted as an excuse for any conduct in society. A man insulted a lady at a ball the other night, but was fully forgiven by her the next day when he pleaded that he had been intoxicated! The lady should have found that the one reason for non-forgiveness; then the man might have hesitated before he indulged again. As it was, I myself saw him with wild eyes and red face once more a few nights after.

There must be thousands of young girls in America at this day who know in their hearts that they have committed some action which they never would have committed but for that extra sip of cocktail, or home brew, insidiously thrust upon them. What thousands and millions perhaps, I might say, of young men and middle-aged men and old men there must be who must know that their ills, physical, moral, and commercial, can be traced to the same cause. A pitiful weakness of will, which permitted "a glass too much." There are aspects of things which our squeamish sensibilities dislike looking at, but it is only by facing them squarely that their full horror can be realized.

It is not even "quite nice" to speak about them, and I shall probably be accused of not being "quite nice" for daring to allude to them, but every sensible reader, who is not wanting to throw dust in his own or her own eyes, because of personal indulgences, will absolutely agree with me, that to face things and expose them is justifiable when the motive is to aim at a better state.

Think mercilessly of the results of intoxication. They are filthy. Imagine, girls, the man that you love—imagine, boys, the girl you reverence, staggering up to bed—vomiting, as the French lady described it—all over the floor—too degraded to care or notice—saying foolish things, and then in bed snoring heavily—and the next day with an evil-smelling breath and a headache, trying to pretend it is indigestion!

Or at least if they have become too hardened for these untoward horrors to occur, think of the pain of having to watch the gradual moral and physical degradation, the thinning hair, the haggard or bloated faces, the unreasonable tempers! Apart from all the moral aspects, think of the vulgarity of it all—how cheap! how ill-bred—how primitive! Why not determine only to abate just a little—one cocktail—or one drink and be satisfied with that. At present it is like pigs at a trough, everyone swallowing as much as he can get. A man already unsure of himself said to the hostess near me when she asked him if he would not have another cocktail, "I have had quite enough, but in these days it seems a pity to leave anything!" What a line of reasoning for a grown man to use! At fashionable country club dances, I am told where drink at fabulous prices can be smuggled in, by the end of the evening, when the débutantes have had countless orange juices reinforced by synthetic gin, is it any wonder that on the way home in the motors conduct quite unbecoming to ladies and gentlemen occurs?

A bride of two weeks, who had been decently brought up, came in tears to her mother when I was there, telling her that while on their wedding journey, at a party given by some of her rich relatives, in the place where they were—her young husband had become so terribly drunk that he had to be carried upstairs and put to bed, in a strange house, amidst everyone's laughter—and of her shame and humiliation. The mother consoled her, and said she must not grieve so; she must forgive him and be sympathetic and overlook it, this once! Then I interferred! I held forth in rage and frightened the poor lady! It is this palliation, this "overlooking" which encourages a disgusting weakness which will become a frightful stain upon this great nation, if the social leaders do not arise to a sense of their duties and a realization of their power to stop it. In every home town where the Cosmopolitan penetrates, I should like to feel that, after reading this article, the fashionable leaders of the local society would get together, and formulate a plan that

social ostracism shall be the fate of any member of their company who is ever seen under the influence of liquor; that they will not have unlimited cocktails served before dinner—only one for each person, and that it shall be considered low and vulgar for any girl to drink a cocktail at all! If they stick to this for a year, think of the difference in society!

The young man who has the habit would of course continue to drink secretly, but would not dare to show

himself to the world—and the still younger ones coming on would hesitate before acquiring the habit. To appeal to women's clubs or any company of serious workers for welfare as organizations, would not have much effect; the young people who do drink to excess are quite indifferent as to the organizations' opinions of such and probably think

them composed of elderly bores. The only appeal is to individuals—those who have nice homes and prestige, who give entertainments to which an invitation is a coveted thing. These in every town have infinite power, and are shamefully neglecting their duty to their nation if they do not exercise it.



An intoxicated girl is a sacrilege! And yet these sights are to be seen with more and more frequency.

You Americans Are Making Beasts of Yourselves

It is in the hands of the women of America, the thinking and refined women of the world of fashion and social prominence in this great country, to make a stand against this vulgarity; and when they have accomplished this work, they will have the

excess who rarely, if ever, touched it before Prohibition came into effect. How ridiculous this is; how perfectly childlike thus to become addicted to a habit which never appealed to them before merely because it is now a thing forbidden. They are

These are The Most Widely - Discussed Articles You Ever Read in Any Magazine

NO magazine ever published a feature that aroused so much discussion throughout America as these articles of Mrs. Glyn's in COSMOPOLITAN. We are tremendously pleased, because we believe that this discussion, especially as it has stirred the whole nation to look at itself, will be extremely beneficial to the American people.

Thousands of letters have already reached this office, many disagreeing, some agreeing, with Elinor Glyn in her criticism of us Americans. All over the country the newspapers have taken up the subject. We are hearing from scores of cities of ministers preaching about it, lectures on it, clubs considering what—if Mrs. Glyn is right—can be done to remedy conditions.

Fundamentally, we Americans are the greatest people in the world. But, sometimes, we don't study ourselves as seriously as we might. We need some one to tell us how we appear to others. Anything we do to remedy our faults—and we most surely have them—is worth while.

We are glad, for this reason, to know that Mrs. Glyn's articles have created such a furor of comment.

For after all no one can approve of it—and I am sure that there must be many in every city who would welcome any suggestion for its suppression. It is perfectly useless to inveigh against any failing without suggesting a remedy, but in this case the unwritten law could cure the evil.

The whole phenomenon of this sudden laying aside of all restraint and decency is very interesting from a psychological point of view.

History shows us that the wave has periodically swept over the peoples of the earth. The "Dyonisiac Revival" it was called among the Greeks. Whenever the state religion became too ceremonious and stiff, a wild longing for an outbreak cropped up, and the most respectable maids and matrons joined the mad throng on their way to Parnassus to seek communion with the Beyond in the only way they knew of then, in a wild orgy—beating drums and dancing, arrayed in the skins of fauns, until in an ecstasy of intoxication they imagined they were in communion with their gods.

The ancients admittedly had some spiritual reason, however primitive, for their outbursts, but now there is no admitted reason at all; it is just drift, and people, otherwise sensible, never stop to analyze where their weakness is dragging them, never seem to reflect what a frightful responsibility they are incurring by not checking this among their children.

Once one could go out to dinner, and a cocktail would be offered before one went in to the dining room—and then wines would be sparingly served through the meal. But now every host seems to have a frantic desire to press continual drinks upon his guests, before dinner and after dinner, and throughout the evening.

Schoolgirls of fifteen drink these horrible mixtures without turning a hair. And all for what? Because life is so strenuous? Because things move so fast that human mechanism cannot stand the strain without some kind of alcoholic stimulation?

If so it looks as if the extinction of civilization is not so far off after all! But it is cowardly to let things be, even if the chance of betterment seems hopeless.

There are thousands of people who are now using liquor to

ably feel in their heart that a dry country is a good thing for the other fellow and especially for the workers!—and would vote "dry" again if they had the opportunity. It is only a silly, childish contrariness which makes them resent the law's being put into force against themselves and makes them take a perverted pleasure in defying it.

Mr. Shepherd pointed out in his article "Who's Drinking in America?" in the December COSMOPOLITAN, that there is an almost universal conspiracy in all parts of the country to evade Prohibition. He showed that this law breaking spirit is not confined to the underworld nor to those who might be expected to let their selfish desires lead them into transgression, but that people of standing in their communities, whose conduct should be an example to others, are sneering at the Constitution of the United States. What can be the effect of this on their children? It cannot fail to instill a contempt for law and order and to prove an encouragement to the younger generation to continue in its reckless use of alcohol.

No sensible people can object to the moderate use of wine and no reasonable complaint can be made against its use by those whose cellars were filled before the law of the country prohibited alcoholic drinks, provided it is used with discretion and sparingly and not offered to those weaklings who never can be satisfied with a single drink, and more important, provided it is never offered to young girls and boys.

Faddists ruin all causes because they offend common sense. To insist that all drinking of intoxicants is sin is to show no knowledge of the psychology of the human spirit,

which will always seek some medium to obtain exhilaration. It is excess which should be guarded against, and the crusade should be against excess. I would ask every person who reads this article to think over it carefully, and then let his imagination run on to the picture of what will be the result if this hideous overindulgence is permitted to go on unchecked. And if he will do this faithfully I am not afraid of his verdict.



HARRISON FISHER AND THE DOG ON THE COVER

Look at the dog on the cover of this month's *Cosmopolitan* and then at the dog Harrison Fisher is holding in his arms. It takes no great stretch of the imagination to see that they are the same—"Greenwich Binks," as he's called, the prize-winning Sealyham terrier that is this famous artist's constant companion. As a model, Mr. Binks was probably the most trying known to art, as he refused to keep a pose more than five seconds at a time.



The pearls were gone absolutely and finally.

A Happy Adventure of the Colonel's Lady and Judy Cinderella O'Grady

SKIN DEEP

—which proves that nothing can make you forget your troubles so quickly as a story
by FRANK R. ADAMS

Illustrations by Charles D. Mitchell

MRS. NORMA GRANT-GRAHAME surveyed her fifty year old reflection with deep distaste.

Mrs. Grant-Grahame's soul was a wisp of smoke, a fairy thing that floated over the housetops, but her body was a tool that could just barely be crowded into a stout size corset of the prevailing mode.

"Clarice," she decided, "take off that pearl necklace. It only makes my neck look older."

The maid unfastened the clasp and held the trickle of glowing beads by one end.

Her mistress continued: "What wouldn't I have given to have had those things when I was young, but what good are they to me now? My jewels, my lingerie, my furs, my stockings, my hats are the trappings of romance, and the body I put them on is built for sitting in a comfortable chair and knitting."

"I'm sure madam is unnecessarily harsh with herself."

Mrs. Grant-Grahame grinned at her maid. "That's all right, Clarice, or whatever your Irish, or real, name is. You know it makes you mad, just the same as it does me, to see us diamond-dusted dowagers puffing around from beauty parlors to hair-dressers, to Turkish baths, while youngsters like yourself grub away your beauty in work that spoils your hands and your complexions. Why, you'd look a thousand times better in my things than I do—you've got an ankle that would justify the price I pay for my silk stockings and your neck and shoulders could stand close scrutiny if some ones eye should be attracted to them by gleaming jewelry."

She paused in her monologue. "Put on the necklace," she commanded. "You know you're dying to see how it will look."

Clarice smiled. "I already know, madam."

"Huh!" Mrs. Grant-Grahame sniffed. "Of course! I should have done the same myself. Well, put it on anyway and let me see how I wish I looked."

The effect was eminently satisfactory, especially so to Clarice whose color heightened with pleasure at the sight of her own interesting reflection in the mirror.

"I'm the only human woman in the world who would ever think of doing what I am about to do," decided Mrs. Grant-Grahame. "I am going to play that I'm one of those meddlesome fairies who go around rewarding poor but virtuous young ladies in the story books. By the way, Clarice, are you poor but virtuous?"

"Moderately so," the girl responded after a moment's reflection.

"The young lady will take a little of each," mused the dowager. "Temperance has always been my motto, also. Keep the necklace on for the moment but take off everything else."

The fairy godmother viewed the effect of this command critically. "You carry yourself well, child, and I never dreamed that those flat front and back lines could be achieved without a corset. I've never seen anyone like you before in just this stage of frank adornment. I guess that people of your build don't patronize the Turkish baths. Put on those chiffon stockings I bought last week in a moment of extravagant idealism. I've never worn them, so they'll fit close enough."

Little by little the two conspirators built up on a foundation which nature had lavishly endowed with slim, suggested curves, blue eyes, nearly-black hair and an interesting mouth, an edifice which, when completed, Mrs. Grant-Grahame declared with a wistful sigh to be a "veritable man trap." The gown had presented the only difficulty, but Clarice had one of her own made

over from her mistress's last year's black velvet. By cutting it about twice as low as Clarice had dared to in the first place it made a very acceptable frame for a pair of flawless shoulders which, in turn, supported proudly a very round neck which was embraced ardently by the strand of gorgeous pearls.

"I don't think I'd wear any other jewelry," the wise old lady decided. "Pearls are the only ornaments for youth and no one is ever able to afford them until she gets too old to wear them. I have only a vague notion as to what those things are worth at present prices, but a dozen years ago they cost a small fortune."

"Do you mind only going to the opera?" Mrs. Grant-Grahame asked deferentially when they were both ready for the street.

The girl laughed. "You asked that in just the tone of voice I always use in addressing you." It was noticeable that the tones of her own voice were not deferential in the least.

"It seemed a bit tame to be able merely to offer a grand opera to a person who would doubtless prefer what I believe is called 'jazz.'"

"But I love opera—or think I should if I ever saw any. I used to be able to play the Miserere from 'Il Trovatore' on the piano myself."

"Don't let anybody know that. The Miserere is only being done on grind organs this season. But we'll do the opera then."

"Suppose we meet some of madam's friends?" the girl questioned doubtfully.

"Suppose we do?"

"Some one might recognize me."

"I doubt it. No one would suspect me of being as crazy as this. In the box with us will probably be an old lady—older than I am even—a friend of mine, Mrs. Homer. I usually send her two seats every Tuesday. I don't think you've seen her. She seldom calls at the house, as she has not the means to return what she calls my lavish hospitality, but I send her the opera seats so that they will arrive just in time for the performance. The fact that if she does not use them they would be wasted overcomes her scruples and she's always there. She's a widow and very seldom has anyone with her, so we three will doubtless be the only occupants of my box. I'm sorry not to be able to provide you with a Prince Charming, but the best I can do is two old ladies. At any rate we shall be an excellent foil for your own youth. Telephone the garage for the limousine."

Mrs. Grant-Grahame had two cars, but only one chauffeur and no footman. Terence was too perfect a driver and mechanic to need any help and the days of ostentation were over so far as his mistress was concerned.

So it was Terence himself who was holding open the door of the car as the two ladies came down the front steps. Mrs. Grant-Grahame got in first and he did not see who his second passenger was until she already had her foot on the running board and the light from the ceiling dome fell on her face and her, perhaps intentionally, exposed shoulders. Anyway she needn't have taken any chance of a cold in the chest because her mistress had loaned a very wonderful sable cape which didn't go badly with Clarice's eyes and skin at all.

"Clar—" began the driver before he recollected himself and snapped his jaws shut with an audible click.

"Terence thought at first that you were some one he knew," suggested Mrs. Grant-Grahame when the car was finally in motion.

Terence in fact still thought so and he unobtrusively adjusted the rear-view mirror so that he could see the occupants of the

car. Clarice detected the maneuver, however, and, asking Mrs. Grant-Grahame's permission, snapped off the dome light.

"Terence is too darn fresh," she said, quite out of character. "He needn't think we're engaged just because I let him take me to the movies once a week. He's the most jealous beau I ever had."

"You have had many?" the older woman suggested.

"Lots," agreed Clarice, "but not serious ones. They always want to get married right away and that spoils it. I'd rather wait."

"For what?"

"I don't know. But I'm glad I always did. Otherwise I should not have been here tonight."

II

MRS. ROBERT HOMER was already dressed in her one evening gown when the tickets for the opera arrived. Why not? They had come every Tuesday during the season and she might as well be ready. It saved a lot of flurry at the last minute.

She had the pasteboard strips in her hand when her housemaid announced that Mr. Peter Haynes was calling. The maid carried, not his card, but a letter.

Mrs. Homer knew no one by the name of Haynes, but the letter doubtless supplied the introduction, so she read it first before meeting its bearer. It said:

DEAR AUNT CYNTHIA:

The young man who is bringing this to you is Peter Haynes. He looks considerably like a Spaniard and he ought to because he has lived all but one of his thirty-two years in Spanish-speaking South American countries. But his parents were both Americans and he was born in the land of the free himself. He's going back to his own country for the first time partly because I have been telling him what a great place it is. For that reason I feel somewhat responsible for his having a good time. I've been out of touch with things so long that I can't tell him where to go or what to see.

Won't you please take him in hand for a day or so until he gets familiar with the ropes?

Your loving nephew,
ALEX.

It had been at least ten years since she had heard from Alex, so the note was rather a surprise. Ten years ago her husband had been alive, she had had her own automobiles, a town house and a country house, both usually full of guests. Entertaining was then not much of a problem. Alex had apparently not heard or had forgotten that with her widowhood had come shrinking fortunes, and that now she had barely enough to live on, nothing whatever for hospitality.

She wondered what she should do—what she could do. Perhaps the young and inconvenient guest could suggest something himself.

She entered her living room. "Humph!" she greeted the young man, who rose as she came in. "You do look like a Spaniard."

He took her hand and pressed it to his lips.

"And you act like one."

"Your nephew told you that?" he queried.

"He did, but he would not have needed to."

"But I am not a bit, really."

He defended. "I know American slang like, 'You said a mouthful, kid,' 'Beat it,' 'Dumbell,' and 'Let's go.'"

There was just enough softness of foreign accent on his tongue to make the American idiom sound ridiculous. Mrs. Homer laughed outright.

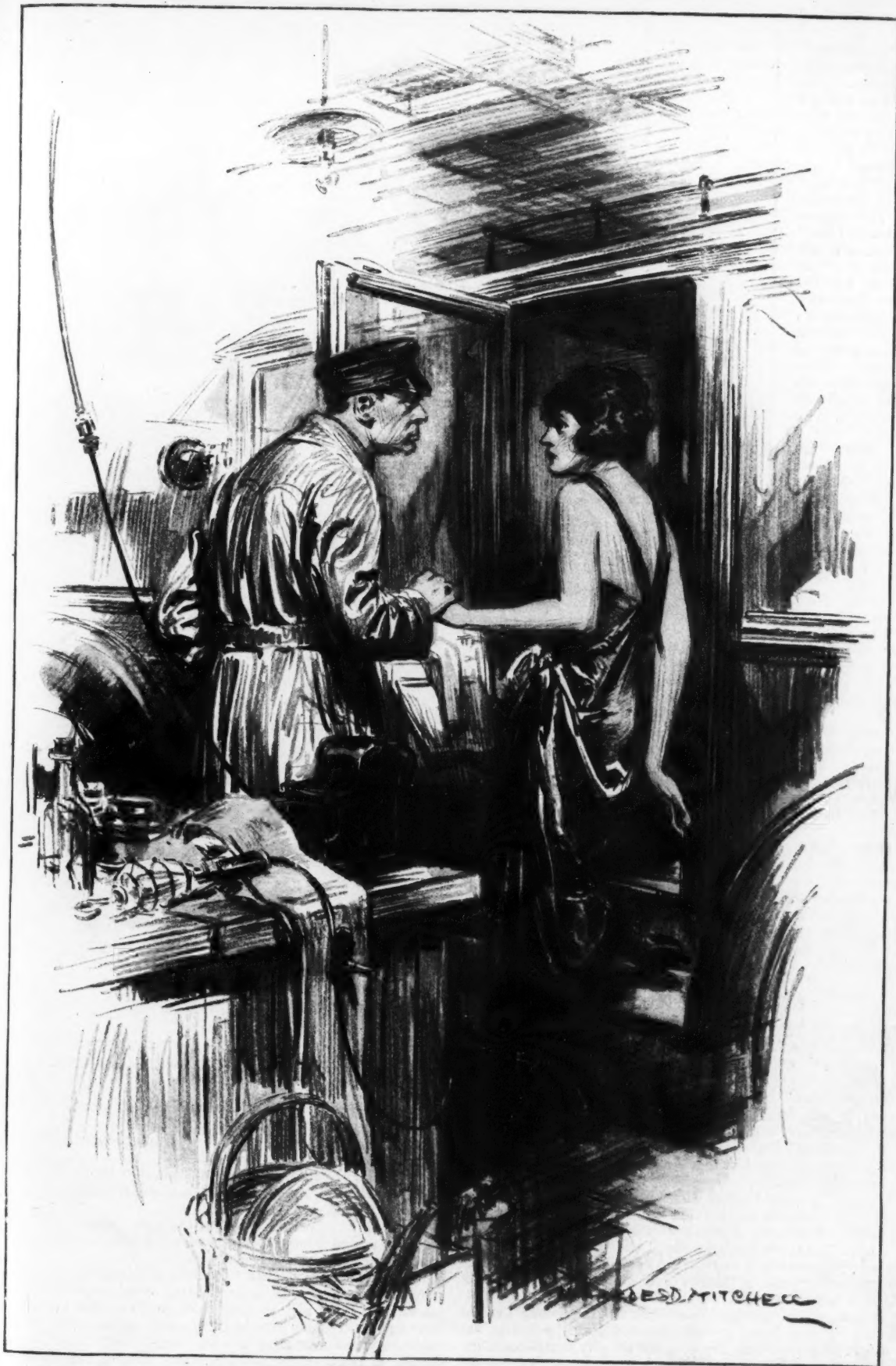
His face fell. "Didn't I say those things perfectly?" he demanded indignantly.

HERE is the sort of letter that always comes to us with a story by Frank R. Adams. This one came with this story.

Thanks for the way you handled my stories "Mrs. You" and "The Comedian." I am grateful for everything including the existence of Charles D. Mitchell, the world's most characteristically cosmopolitan artist.

yours,

Frank



"Oh," said Terence in pretended disappointment. "I thought you came out to kiss your everyday beau good night."

"Absolutely," she complimented. "With that vocabulary you can get along in the best society in America." She referred to the letter in her hand, "Alex says I'm to entertain you. He's forgotten how old I am."

"Madam is not old, she is—" he hesitated for the word—"mature."

"Correct—at any rate I am not a contemporary of yours and I doubt if I could show you around to all the places you'd like to go."

"I should not care to be shown around," declared Mr. Haynes musically. "It is enough simply to sit here and listen to your voice."

"Romeo, you're under the wrong balcony. But I thank you just the same. Would it bore you too much to sit through a performance at the opera?"

"I would be enchanted, madam."

"It is 'Jongleur de Notre Dame.'"

"I know the score but I've never heard it sung."

"There won't be a soul in the box which we will be in except another old lady. I'm telling you this so that you won't be too much disappointed."

III

THUS Clarice and Peter were in no way prepared for each other. The pleasurable shock of meeting was intensified because neither had expected any entertainment save music.

"She is a fairy," Peter confided to his own particular old lady, "and you are an angel to have conducted me blindfolded to this particular paradise."

"Humph!" grunted Cynthia Homer. Even a dowager can get fed up on the praises of another woman when sung by a personable barytone. "Save some of your pretty speeches for her."

"I have thousands more for her," the exuberant youth responded. "Just to look at that tiny mole on her right shoulder blade makes me think of things I shall not have time to tell her until after we are married."

"Brakes, brakes, my dear boy. You haven't known her ten minutes. If you should get married and come back with her for a wife when you only came to see the city what would my nephew, Alex, say?"

"He'd say, 'Where did you find her and when does the next boat leave for that place?'"



"You can't pay any attention to what she says." Mrs. Grant-Grahame turned

"What are you two whispering about?" demanded Mrs. Grant-Grahame. "It's terribly impolite."

"Mr. Haynes is telling me," Mrs. Homer replied maliciously, "about the plans for his wedding."

"Oh!" The exclamation came from the lovely lips of the owner of the tiny mole on the right shoulder blade. "Are you about to be married?"

"Yes, but the details aren't settled yet. There, the curtain is going up. I'll have to wait and tell you how wonderful she is after the end of the first act."

All of which left Clarice Cinderella O'Farrell in a rather annoyed frame of mind to enjoy the long act of grand opera. Because, like every girl, perhaps more so than most because this was an only time for her, she had been indulging in the feminine indoor sport of wondering how her head would feel on the manly bosom of the man she had just met. That is the logical psychological reaction of a first encounter between a man and a maid. In this case Clarice had developed the picture in her mind, and



all of the color and movement because he was wondering how come nature made girls so beautiful.

During the intermission he told all of them about his future wife. His description sounded so much like herself that it made Clarice madder even while it intrigued her. It intrigued her because it made her think of what might have been, and it made her mad to think that, being susceptible to her kind of charm, some other designing creature had seen him first.

IV

AFTER the opera Peter Haynes developed unexpected talents as an entertainer of ladies of all ages. First of all he did not suggest that it was getting late and that probably they ought to get to bed early. That in itself was flattering to the two matrons who really should have been on their way to a beauty sleep. Next he asked to be conducted to the noisiest place in town and when there made each of the older ladies dance with him first before he led Clarice out on the floor. This made the two dowagers feel as if they had just been internally intrusted with a pint of forbidden vintage champagne. They were therefore friendly critics of the actions of their charges.

Not that aforesaid charges behaved in any way different from the other guests of the establishment; not so much so, if anything, because there were couples on the floor who would have been arrested if there hadn't been any music. Peter Haynes danced with Latin verve and Clarice was a good follower. Most of his steps were Greek to her but her intuition and the fact that she was held as if in an elastic vise made imitation fairly simple.

And he said rather distracting things that kept her mind off from her feet. Not that he was fresh—*au contraire*, as the boys say since they spent the war in Texas—but Peter had an intimate way of whispering that you did your hair becomingly which gave you a thrill which was the next thing to being pleasurably insulted. He was so respectful that one almost asked him to do something he shouldn't just to break the strain. To be with him reminded Clarice of playing around just out of reach of a dog on a chain and wondering what would happen if you unfastened him.

"Never were pearls so appropriately owned," he told her during one of their dances together. "I see that they are genuine, too, just like everything else about you."

"Are you sure?"

"Quite. I am more or less an authority on pearls."

"And women?"

He laughed. "Pearls are easier."

"I meant—are you an authority on the genuineness of women?"

"I'd stake my life on you."

Clarice sighed. It was wonderful to be made love to like that, but very disturbing to know that he was being charmed by jewels, clothes, even manners that were not hers for everyday wear, but merely ornaments that she had assumed for a few hours. He was so much her idea of a man that she wanted to cast everything false away from her, to stand before him in a state of nature and ask, "Do you like me now?"

At least she could disclaim the jewels. (Continued on page 119)

to the police officer. "The fool girl is in love with him."

the result had compared favorably with the final fadeout of any movie she had ever seen. In other words she liked him. There is always an instant attraction or repulsion between representatives of the opposite sexes. All that happens afterward is often determined in the first thirty seconds of play.

So quite naturally she resented the news that some woman had a tag all ready to tie on his coat lapel. Clarice's thoughts may be accurately translated into "Gosh darn!" And all this without thinking that it wouldn't make any difference anyway, even if he were as free as the down from an overripe dandelion, floating on a June zephyr. Tomorrow she would be Mrs. Grant-Grahame's maid and would never see him again. Even at that a girl can wish, can't she?

Clarice missed a lot of the golden music that was being poured from several million dollars' worth of throats on the stage below because she was wishing she had not met the man who sat just close enough behind her so that she could almost feel his breath on the back of her neck. And he missed most of the music and

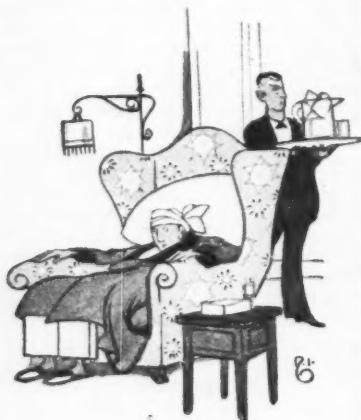


Stories *that* Have

By MONTAGUE GLASS

IN the old days when young men sat up to all hours of the morning, kept extremely bad company and drank a great deal more than was good for them—of course they don't do that nowadays—a Mr. Bertie Stanhope never could get used to the stuff, and suffered frightfully in consequence. One day a bill collector with an "account rendered" for boots or cigars called early at Bertie's flat and asked the porter at what time Mr. Stanhope breakfasted.

"Breakfast!" was the reply. "Bless you, he doesn't breakfast. But he's generally sick every morning about eleven."



AN old Scots seaman who had lost his discharge papers applied for a job on a wind jammer, but was rejected in favor of a seaman whose papers were in order. Before the vessel sailed, however, one of her hands failed to show up, so the old salt who had lost his discharge papers was taken on at the last moment.

One day in midocean, the seaman whose discharge papers were in order, was sitting on a sling with a bucket of tar painting the side of the vessel when the ship gave a lurch and the poor fellow went overboard, bucket, tar and all.

The old salt who had lost his discharge papers broke the news to the captain.

"Captain," he said, "you know that man *with the papers?*"

"Yes," the captain said, "what of him?"

"Well, he's just gone off with your bucket," the old salt replied.

AND that reminds me of a story J. J. Kerrigan told last month about a sick Irishman who lived in a garret with a low roof and doorway. He was confined to his bed, groaning with pain, when a friend entered. "Well, Andy," the friend asked, "how are you feeling now?"

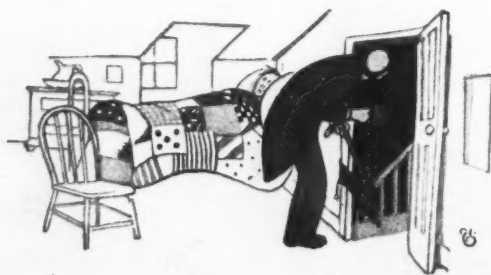
"I'm in a dreadful way, Peter," Andy said. "I doubt if I'll ever get up and around again."

"Why, man, you're joking!" Peter exclaimed. "Sure, you look like a two year old. You're in splendid shape. There ain't a thing the matter with you. Take a sup of this now, and don't be after imagining you're sick. You're as well and

hearty a man as ever I see, barring a little pain in the chest. Come on, now, drink this."

Andy drank, but his heart was not in it.

"I don't feel no better, Peter," he said. "I'm afraid I'll never get out of this bed alive."



"Now that's a foolish way to talk," Peter declared cheerfully. "You're good for twenty-five years yet. Next week you'll be wheeling a barrow the same like you always done—only stronger. You look like a man half your age. Have another sup, there's a good man, and for heaven's sake cheer up. You're in the pink of condition, if you but knew it. You've got a fine healthy color in your cheeks."

Andy drank again and groaned some more.

"No, Peter," he said, "it's no use. I feel it in my bones. I'm done for this time. I'll never get up from this mattress alive."

"Nonsense! Nonsense!" Peter cried. "Look at the arms on you. Sure, you're a regular Dempsey. You're a heavyweight and as healthy a man as any in the parish. You're just low in spirits from living in this garret. To look at you, anyone would think you was an athlete. Just keep it in your mind, now, that you're fine and healthy, and in a couple of days, you'll be back on the job, working harder than ever. You're soldiering—that's what you are. You're a fine, red-blooded, hearty young fellow. I only wish I had as long to live as you had. Now keep them cheerful thoughts in your mind, and remember what I tell you. There's nothing in the world the matter with you. Nothing!"

He clasped Andy's fevered hand and turned cheerfully to leave the little garret. In fact, he had worked himself up into such an exalted state of enthusiasm over Andy's splendid condition that he failed to notice how low the doorway was, and he gave his head a nasty bump.

"My God!" he exclaimed. "How will they ever get a corpse out of here!"





Made *Me* Laugh

— the Famous Humorist

IRELAND is the country where shopkeepers are sometimes such amateurs of business that the main thing to be achieved is not selling merchandise but the pleasant social intercourse with neighbors which running a shop involves.

"I see where you have a fine fish shop opened in Ballynascran," says one of the characters in a Somerville and Ross story.

"We did have," the friend replies, "but it's closed this month past."

"I wonder why was *that* now?"

"Well, the man that run the fish shop complained that morning, noon and night, people was bothering him for fish, fish—nothing but fish."

THE children of a young college professor had been sent upstairs and told to keep quiet while their parents were entertaining guests at dinner.

During a lull in the conversation, the youngest boy appeared in the dining room doorway.

"Mamma," he said, "there's nothing but clean towels in the bathroom. Shall I start one?"

A YOUNG man called at the house of a celebrated diagnostician and asked to see the doctor.

"Have you an appointment?" the office nurse asked.

"No, I haven't," the young man replied.

The nurse consulted the doctor's appointment list.

"I think I can work you in after the next patient leaves," she said, "so please go inside that room and take your clothes off."

"Take my clothes off!" the young man exclaimed. "What for?"

"The doctor has made it an absolute rule not to see anybody unless that is done," the nurse said firmly.

"But I don't want to take my clothes off," the young man insisted.

"Then I'm sorry, but you can't see the doctor," the nurse said.

"Well, if that's the case, I'm game," the young man said.

A few moments later the doctor entered the room and found the young man awaiting him stark naked.

"Well, sir," the doctor said, "what seems to be *your* trouble?"

"Doctor," the young man replied, "I called to see if you would renew your wife's subscription to the *Ladies' Home Journal*."

IT is more years than one would care to admit since Franklin P. Adams told the following yarn:

A man goes into a drug store and says to the soda clerk: "I want a glass of plain soda water without flavor."

"What flavor do you want it without?" the clerk asks.

"What flavors *have* you?" the customer inquires.

"We have strawberry, vanilla, chocolate and pineapple," the clerk replies.

"All right," says the customer, "I'll have it without pineapple."

"We're all out of pineapple," the clerk says. "Will you have it without strawberry?"



IN Greater New York the Fire Department has placarded all factories and stores with signs printed in red ink warning the public that smoking is prohibited under a penalty of fifty dollars, and to factory workers no matter how illiterate, a sign printed in red ink seems to have but one meaning. The other day a clothing manufacturer who had been much annoyed by his factory employees passing through the accounting department, posted up large signs reading:

NO ADMISSION EXCEPT ON
BUSINESS

To make these signs more prominent, they were printed in red ink.

The day after they were posted, the manufacturer caught a presser walking through the accounting department.

"Hey there," he called, pointing to one of the placards, "what does it say on that sign there?"

The old presser who had never learned to read or write, shrugged his shoulders. "Who is smoking?" he asked.

JAMES J. MONTAGUE'S favorite story is that of the cow-puncher who married the school teacher in a small Wyoming town. Immediately after the wedding they left town on horseback to take up their residence on a ranch house some forty miles away in a wild cow country.

A year later one of the wedding guests met the bridegroom in the same small town.

"Hello, Bill," the wedding guest said. "How's the wife?"

"Ain't you heard?" the cow-puncher asked.

"Heard what?" his friend inquired in return.

"Why, you know that day we got married and started to ride out to the ranch house," the cow-puncher explained, "my wife fell off of her horse and broke her leg. We was twenty miles from a doctor too."

"Ain't that terrible!" the friend exclaimed.

"You bet your life it was terrible," the cow-puncher said sadly.

"What did you do?" the friend asked.

"What *could* I do?" the cow-puncher replied. "I shot her."



Broken Barriers

(Continued from page 19)

"We always require this; it's just a matter of routine," she explained, and as Grace filled in the blank she looked at Irene and nodded her approval of the candidate.

"That's all. The rest is up to Miss Boardman," remarked Miss Lupton, scanning Grace's answers and giving the form a number.

Miss Boardman, a woman of forty, short, plump and brisk of manner and speech, surveyed Grace with full appreciation, remarking that Miss Kirby had covered all the details.

"We'll be ready for you Monday morning. Very glad to know you, Miss Durland. You will begin at twelve-fifty; Miss Kirby will explain about the bonuses and other little things."

Grace left the store elated. Already she felt herself an essential unit of Shipley's. The great lower room seemed larger than when she had entered. She went into the book department and idled over the counters, opening volumes that aroused her interest. She had no intention of relinquishing her interest in bookish things. She would test life, probe into the heart of things, but she would hold fast to all that she had gained in her two years at the university. She had been impressed by what the worldly-wise Irene had said of the value of a little learning in getting on. She meant to propose to her friend that they attack French together; and there were many lines of reading she intended to pursue with a view to covering the more important cultural courses she had been obliged to abandon. She felt tremendously sure of herself.

When she reached home her mother was leaving for the first fall meeting of the West End Literary Club which had held together for years in spite of the deterioration of the neighborhood. Mrs. Durland made much of her loyalty to the organization.

"Well, Grace, I hope—" Mrs. Durland began, gathering up a number of magazines she was carrying to the meeting.

"I've done gone and done it, mama! I go to work at Shipley's Monday morning."

"I was afraid you would," said Mrs. Durland with a sigh. "You're so headstrong, Grace. With a little patience we'd have found something more suitable—more in keeping—"

"Well, I may not like it. If I don't I'll change to something else. So please don't worry about it."

CHAPTER TWO

"I MUSTN'T seem to be too much interested in you," said Irene on Grace's first morning at Shipley's. "We can't play favorites and it wouldn't do to make the other girls jealous. The first few days everything will seem strange, but all you have to do is to stand around and keep your eyes open. Be nice to all of the girls—that's the card to play. One girl in a department can make all the rest uncomfortable. Miss Boardman's a little sharp sometimes—but never talk back! She knows her business and prides herself on keeping away ahead of her quota of sales. The management is strong for *esprit*

de corps, and there's a social club that's supposed to encourage that sort of thing. There'll be a few dances during the winter and a theater party and a few little things like that. I really get a lot of fun out of them."

Grace was No. 18. Her investiture with a number was the only real shock she experienced in taking her place in Shipley's; she felt as though she had lost her identity. One of her new associates who was instructing her in the routine, which began with an inspection of the stock, the tightening of buttons, the repair of minor damages incurred in the handling of garments, addressed her casually as Eighteen as if that had been Grace's name bestowed in baptism. Miss Boardman had given her a quick looking over to satisfy herself that the new employee had met the store's requirements as to dress, and told her to watch the other girls and lend a hand where she could.

Miss Boardman was beyond question a person of strong executive talent. Though burdened with desk work as the head of the department nothing escaped her watchful eye on the floor confided to her direction. By eleven o'clock the ready to wear presented a scene of greatest animation.

A spectacled old lady fortified with a handbag, appeared and surveyed the scene of confusion with dismay.

"Eighteen, see what that lady wants," said Miss Boardman as she hurried by.

"What is it, please?" asked Grace feeling her heart thump as she realized that she had accosted her first customer. She smiled encouragingly and the old lady returned the smile, and said in a crisp, businesslike tone:

"I want two suits—a gray and a blue, cut as nearly like this thing I have on as possible. I've written my exact measurements on this card so don't jump at me with a tape-line. And I want a plain long coat for rough weather—something unfashionable but serviceable. You look like an intelligent girl so I don't expect you to show me anything in red or green. And don't tell me what they're wearing in Paris, London or New York as though I cared! I pay cash so there'll be no time lost in looking up my credit card."

Grace placed a chair for her singular customer, took hurried counsel of Irene and was soon in the throes of her first sale. The little old lady asked few questions but her inquiries were much to the point.

"Show me only good quality," she said, tossing aside a skirt after asking its price. "You know perfectly well it can't be wool for that money and the color will run the first time it gets rained on."

"That's better. This will do for the blue. Find a gray of similar style."

The gray was more difficult than the blue. She hadn't wanted a mixed weave but a plain gray, which was not in stock. Grace warmed to her work, praising the quality of a gray with a misty heather mixture. Holding the coat at arm's length and becoming eloquent as to the fine quality of the garment, Grace turned to find the customer regarding her with a whimsical smile.

"My dear child, you do that very well.

How long have you been here?" she demanded.

Grace colored. "This is my first day," she confessed. The old lady seemed greatly amused at her discomfiture. Her alert eyes brightened behind her glasses.

"Am I your first customer? Well, you're going to get on. You've made me change my mind and not many people ever do that. That heather tone really pleases me better than the plain smooth cloth I had in mind and I'll take it."

The customer explained that she walked in all weathers and wanted warmth not style in the topcoat with loose sleeves which she described succinctly. Grace produced half a dozen such coats, one of which her customer chose immediately. She slipped it on, said the sleeves were too short, and Irene passing along opportunely said that nothing could be easier than to let out the sleeves the required two inches.

"Be sure she's perfectly satisfied," whispered Irene, "before she leaves. She looks like real money."

The old lady who looked like real money was watching attentively an evening gown which was being displayed before a stylish-looking young woman on the opposite side of the room. She drew out a memorandum book and turned over the leaves.

"I'll wait a moment to see whether that woman over there buys that gown. You might find out the measurements; if it will do for a thirty-six I'll take it for a niece of mine in Evansville. She's very fond of that rose color."

The rose-colored gown was rejected a moment later by the lady who had been considering it and Grace laid it before her customer.

"My niece is just about your height and build, and has your coloring. I'd like to see that on you!"

Grace asked the nearest clerk whether there was any objection to meeting this unlooked for request. Certainly not though there was a model for such purposes. The old lady who looked like real money didn't care to see the model in the gown and said so tartly. She expressed her gratification when Grace paraded before her in the gray and ivory fitting room. The price was three hundred dollars.

"Thank you; I'll take it."

Grace got out of the gown as quickly as possible, and presented the garments already chosen for final approval. The old lady who looked like real money produced from her satchel a check book and a fountain pen.

The total was five hundred and ninety dollars. Grace regarded the bit of paper with awe; it was the largest check she had ever seen. The customer wrote out the shipping directions for her niece's gown, screwed the cap on her pen, took the cash-sale slip Grace gave her and tucked it carefully away.

"You've been very nice to me. Thank you very much." She smilingly extended her hand. "Let this be a little secret between us!"

The secret was a ten dollar bill. The little old lady who really didn't look like money was already in the elevator and Grace turned with relief to Irene, who inspected the office end of the cash-sale



Good pea soup — just taste it!

Pea soup is a favorite round the world. Just dip your spoon tonight into a savory, creamy plateful of Campbell's. You'll say you never tasted such a pea soup—so mellow, so delicious, so rich in quality and satisfaction.

Campbell's Pea Soup is made from dainty tender peas blended, according to Campbell's own recipe, with pure country milk and fresh creamery butter, delicately spiced. How you will like it!

How to prepare Cream of Pea

Simply by adding an equal quantity of milk or cream to Campbell's Pea Soup just before serving you have a velvety, smooth, heavy Cream of Pea which will be one of your prize dishes. Even more attractive served in bouillon cups topped with whipped cream.

21 kinds

12 cents a can

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LOOK FOR THE RED AND WHITE LABEL

slip, and read aloud the signature on the check.

"Beulah Reynolds—you certainly drew a prize! Never saw her before but you've heard of her; one of the old families and she's lived all over the world and has just come back here and bought a new house. I read a piece about her in the paper; she's of the old Hoosier nobility. If she tipped you ten dollars it's a sign she was satisfied. Don't be squeamish about tips—it's all perfectly right—it won't happen often. Don't let your good luck turn your head; there's a lady coming now who looks as though she lived on lemons. Pass the sugar and see what you can do with her."

Mrs. Durland was greatly distressed that a daughter of hers should have met Miss Beulah Reynolds in what she was pleased to term a servile capacity. Miss Reynolds was a personage, and in the remote past Mrs. Durland had met her at a tea, which she described circumstantially. That a lady so distinguished and wealthy should have given Grace ten dollars quite as though she were a servant was humiliating. Miss Reynolds would never have thought of tipping the daughter of Alicia Morley Durland.

"I'm No. 18 to all the world when I'm at Shipley's. If I'd told her in a burst of confidence that I was your daughter she probably wouldn't have given me the ten which I sorely needed. She was as nice as could be and I didn't see anything wrong in taking her money."

Thanks to Mrs. Reynolds's generous purchases Grace's envelope for the first week contained \$35.21, not counting the tip. Though warned that this was beginner's luck she was satisfied that she could master the art of salesmanship and earn a good income.

"You'll build up a line of regular customers," said Irene, "who'll always ask for you, and that's what counts."

Grace quickly made friends in the store, both in and out of her own department. Two members of her sorority, who like herself had been obliged to leave college before finishing, sought her out; an alumna of the state university, a woman of thirty, who was employed in the office as auditor, took her to lunch; a charming English woman, stranded in America and plying her needle in the alteration room, brought her books to read.

CHAPTER THREE

I

MRS. DURLAND, no doubt to show her sympathetic interest in her daughters' labors, asked innumerable questions at the supper table, and during the clearing of the dishes, as to the days' adventures. Whenever Grace mentioned some customer her mother or Ethel knew or knew about, that person was subjected to the most searching analysis. It was incredible that they could be so interested in people they knew often only from seeing their names in the newspapers.

Ethel's preoccupations with her church and philanthropic affairs took her away several evenings in the week, and at such times Grace produced a checkerboard and played with her father while Mrs. Durland read or sewed. The fact that Grace's earnings already averaged higher than

Ethel's made it necessary for Mrs. Durland to soothe any feelings the elder daughter may have had as to this disparity.

Grace found no joy in Ethel. Ethel maintained a mood of quiet exaltation as though she had won the secret of a superior happiness which was hers alone. There was a kind of cloying sweetness in her attitude toward the other members of the family that Grace found hard to bear. Every evening Ethel addressed to her father the same remarks that expressed something of the solicitude a mother might manifest toward a slightly deficient child. The effect of this upon Grace was to deepen her affection and sympathy for her father. Several times she persuaded him to go downtown with her to a big motion picture house where there was good music. He enjoyed the pictures, laughing heartily at the comedies; and laughter had been rare in Stephen Durland's life. Mrs. Durland refused to accompany them; all the pictures she had ever seen had been vulgar and she was on a committee of the State Federation to go before the legislature and demand a more rigid censorship.

Grace's announcement that on evenings when she went to the French class she had now joined she would stay downtown for supper with Irene, did not pass unchallenged at the supper table, which she had begun to dread for its cheerlessness, its opportunity for her mother and sister to parade their general distrust of the human race and the low moral tone of the city itself. One evening, after listening to a reiteration of their forebodings and prophecies of evil, Grace broke the silence with which she usually listened to these discussions.

"I don't know where you get these ideas, Ethel. You must be unfortunate in your acquaintances to hear of so much wickedness."

Mrs. Durland rallied at once to Ethel's support.

"Now, Grace, you know Ethel is older and views everything much more soberly than you do. You know she's in touch with all these agencies that are trying to protect the young from the evils of a growing city."

"Just what evils?" Grace demanded.

"There are some things," said Ethel impressively, "that it's better not to talk about."

"That's always the way!" Grace flared. "You're always insinuating that the world's going to the devil, but you never say just how. I know perfectly well what you're driving at. You think because I work in a department store I can't be so good as you are! I'll tell you right now that the girls I know in Shipley's are just as good as any girls in town—perfectly splendid hard-working girls. And one thing I can tell you, they don't spend their time sneering at other people. I'd rather be the worst sinner in creation than so pure I couldn't see a little good in other people."

"Please, Grace!" Mrs. Durland pleaded. "You're unreasonable. No one was saying anything about you or any other girl in Shipley's."

"Oh, Ethel doesn't have to say it straight out! Every time she takes that sanctified tone she's preaching at me. I don't pretend to be an angel, but I'm tired of hearing how wicked everybody is. I don't dare ask any of the girls I work with to the house; you think they're all rotten."

"I don't think they're all bad, and I've

never said such a thing," said Ethel. "But I have said that Irene Kirby is not the type of girl I'd deliberately choose to be my sister's most intimate friend, and I say it again."

"I hardly know Irene Kirby," said Ethel, "but I have heard some things about her I hate to hear about any girl."

"Such as what? Tell me just what you've heard," said Grace sharply.

"Well, if you *insist*," replied Ethel with affected reluctance, "she's keeping company with a married man. It's been going on for several years. They were seen together last Sunday night, quite late, coming into town. Suppose you ask Irene where she was last Sunday."

"What's the man's name?" Grace demanded.

"Oh, I needn't mention his name! You ask Irene to tell you. A girl friend of mine who used to work in his office saw them."

"I don't believe a word of it," said Grace. "You or I or any other girl might be seen driving with a married man without there being anything wicked about it."

"Well, you asked me and I told you," returned Ethel evenly. "It's not a new story. I knew it when I first said what I did about your going into Shipley's, but I thought I wouldn't tell you why I thought it best for you to keep away from Irene."

"Irene has been fine to me," said Grace quickly; "she's one of the nicest and one of the most intelligent girls I ever knew. I think it poor business for a girl like you, who pretends to be a Christian, to listen to scandalous stories about some one you hardly know. I'll say for Irene that I never heard her speak an unkind word of anyone. Every day she does a lot of little kindnesses for people and she doesn't strut around about it either."

"I don't question that you believe all that, Grace," remarked Mrs. Durland as she served the bread pudding that was the regular dessert for Thursday evening, "but you know Ethel is very careful what she says about every one."

"Yes, I've noticed that," said Grace coldly.

Her father had eaten his pudding and was stolidly slipping his napkin into its ring. The better course might be to follow his example. Silence, Grace reflected, offered the surest refuge from family bickering. She saw the years stretching on endlessly, with her workday followed by evenings of discourse in the cheerless home circle. The prospect was not heartening. It was two against two, and her father was only passively an ally. When Roy came home he would be pretty sure to align himself with his mother and Ethel, in keeping with his general policy of taking the easier and more comfortable way in everything. It flashed through her mind that she might leave home and take a room somewhere or join with two or three other girls and rent an apartment. But her parents needed her help. She knew that her father was wholly unlikely to assist materially with the household expenses. Ethel had not demurred when she volunteered to contribute in ratio to her earnings, which made her share at least a third more each week than Ethel's.

II

ETHEL'S intimations that Irene Kirby was not as good as she ought to be so



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A cleansing cream at night

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First rub the face lightly with Pond's Vanishing Cream. It cannot reappear in a shine. See how smoothly and evenly the powder goes on over this base and how long it stays.

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Before going out smooth a little Pond's Vanishing Cream into the skin

Flaws prevented by nightly cleansing with an oil cream

Blackheads. Blackheads need a more thorough cleansing than ordinary washing can give.

Wash your face with hot water and pure soap. Then work Pond's Cold Cream thoroughly into the pores. As this rich oil cream penetrates the skin, it loosens all the dirt which has lodged deep in the pores. Wipe the cream off with a soft cloth. This leaves the skin really clean.

Wrinkles. For wrinkles you need a cream with an oil base, for oil is the greatest enemy known to wrinkles. Pond's Cold Cream, rubbed gently into the face at night, acts as tonic, stimulating the blood, rousing the skin, and warding off the wrinkles. Too vigorous rubbing is apt to be harmful, but gentle, persistent rubbing, systematically done, is beneficial even to the most delicate skin.



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exasperated Grace that in a spirit of contrariness she hoped they were true. At least she didn't care whether they were true or not. She knew little of Irene's family but the bitterness engendered by her own home life made it seem a natural and pardonable thing for a girl who worked hard and was obliged to live in an atmosphere of perpetual criticism to take her pleasure where she pleased. Her curiosity as to Irene's social contacts was greatly aroused. Irene, outwardly at least, the most circumspect of young women, certainly had mastered the art of keeping her private affairs to herself. Now and then she spoke of having gone to the theater or to a dance with some young man whose name she always mentioned, but when Grace tried to tease her about her suitors Irene dismissed them disdainfully. They were impossible, she said, in her large manner—bank clerks, traveling salesmen or young fellows just starting in small businesses. She wasn't at all interested in marrying a young man with his way to make, cooking for him in the kitchenette of a four-room apartment, with a movie once a week as the reward of faithful service.

These views on matrimony were revealed one day early in November when they were lunching together in Shipley's tea room. She went on to say that she would wait a few years in the hope of meeting some successful, established man who could give her a position in life worth while.

"It has been done before, my dear. It may not sound romantic but it's the only way to play safe. I want to get away from this town; it smothered and chokes me. The firm has sent me to New York twice this last year, and I think I could get along very well down there if I had money to spend. I've been a little afraid you'd engaged yourself to some struggling young professor. No? Well, I'd hate to see you wasting yourself. You've got brains and good looks and I hope you won't throw yourself away. Just what do you do with yourself evenings?"

"Oh, stay at home, mostly. I do a turn in the kitchen, play a game of checkers with father and go to bed to read."

"Wholesome but not exciting! I'd imagined you had a few suitors who dropped in occasionally."

"Haven't had a caller since I came home," Grace replied, beginning to suspect that there was a purpose in these questions.

Irene was wearing a handsome emerald ring that Grace had not noticed before. In keeping with her tone of quiet elegance, Irene never wore jewelry; the ring was a departure, and required an explanation for which Grace hesitated to ask. In spite of their long acquaintance Grace never overcame her feeling of humility before Irene's large view of things, her lofty disdain for small change. Grace knew more out of books than Irene, but in her cogitations she realized that beyond question Irene knew much more of life. Seeing that Grace's eyes were fascinated by the emerald, Irene held up her hand.

"Rather pretty, isn't it?" she asked carelessly. "That cost some real money. A little gift from a man who is foolish enough to admire me."

"It's perfectly beautiful," said Grace, as Irene laid her hand on the table. "It's the very newest setting and everything. I don't believe I ever saw you wear a ring before."

"The first I've worn in years; but this is too good to hide." She looked at the stone absently. "By the way, Grace, you don't seem to be burdened with engagements. I wonder if you'd care to drive into the country tomorrow evening for dinner—just a quiet little party. My friend—the one who gave me this"—she held up her hand—"has a guest, a most interesting man you'd be sure to like. It might amuse you to join us and meet him. A party of three is a little awkward and you'd balance things beautifully."

Grace's heart beat quickened to find herself at last admitted to Irene's confidence, a thing flattering in itself. Ethel's charge that Irene was accepting the attentions of a married man was probably true, or the girl would have approached the matter differently. It dawned upon Grace that the word party had a meaning previously unknown to her, signifying a social event clandestine in character, to which married men did not take their wives. The idea was novel and it caused Grace's wits to range over a wide field of speculation.

"Tomorrow night's our French class," said Grace, recovering herself quickly. "We'd have to cut that."

"Oh, I hadn't forgotten. To be frank about it, I thought that would make it easier for you to get away. I don't know just how your folks at home are—whether they always have to know where you go. As you've been staying downtown on lesson nights that would help you put it over. I suggested Friday night instead of Saturday hoping to make sure of you. There are plenty of girls who'll go on parties but this is a case where just any girl won't do. You'll fit in beautifully and I hope you'll go."

"It's awfully nice of you to ask me," said Grace, her eyes dancing. "But if I mustn't mention the party at home, I'll have to get in early so mother and Ethel won't suspect anything."

"My dear child, let them suspect! My family used to try to check me up but they've got over it. By the way, I think that sister of yours doesn't like me. I passed her in the street yesterday and she gave me what I shouldn't call a loving look."

"She didn't mean anything," said Grace. "Ethel's terribly prim; she has all the old-fashioned ideas about things," said Grace, her mind upon the proposed dinner for four in the country of which she was anxious to know more. "What time do we start?"

"Seven o'clock. You may be sure I trust you or I shouldn't be asking you to go on this party," said Irene. "It's not a social event for the society columns—just an intimate little dinner to be forgotten when we all say good night. Our host is Mr. Kemp—Thomas Ripley Kemp, you know. You've seen his factory? I tell him it's the most conspicuous thing in town and the ugliest."

"Mr. Kemp is—married?" Grace ventured with an attempt at indifference.

"Oh, Tommy's been married for centuries! His wife's one of Shipley's best customers. She was on our floor about a week ago and bought a thousand dollars' worth of stuff. She's awfully nice; I tell Tommy he ought to be ashamed of himself! Tommy's not stingy with his family, and he's terribly proud of them. He has a

daughter in an eastern college and he has just taken his son into his business. Elaine is just about my age—isn't it weird!"

"I think I never saw Mr. Kemp, but of course I've heard of him," remarked Grace, bewildered by the ease with which Irene talked of Kemp and his family. "The other man—what's he like?" asked Grace with feigned carelessness.

"Oh, his name's Ward Trenton and he lives in Pittsburg and is a consulting engineer, one of the best in the country. Ward drops in here every month or two and Tommy always gives him a party. Sometimes he throws it at home or at one of the clubs, and when that's the ticket he naturally forgets to invite me! Screaming, isn't it? Ward isn't really a sport like Tommy, but he'll go on a party and keep amused in his own way. He does a lot of thinking, that man. You'll understand when you meet him. I'm never sure whether Ward approves of me, but he's always nice."

"He may not like me at all," said Grace.

"Don't be foolish! You're just the kind of girl men of that sort like. They're bored to death by girls—you know the kind—who begin every sentence with 'say' and haven't an idea in their heads."

"And Mr. Trenton—" Grace ventured, "is he married too?"

"All the nice men are more or less married, my dear! Ward is and he isn't. Tommy's never seen Mrs. Trenton, but there is such a person."

When Grace recurred to the matter of changing her clothes for the party, Irene's resourcefulness promptly asserted itself.

"There's a very chic suit marked down from eighty-seven to forty-two on account of an imperfection in the embroidery on the cuffs. It will do wonderfully and if you haven't the money handy I'll take care of it till you strike a fat week. We'll try it on you this afternoon and if you like it we'll send it up to Minnie Lawton's apartment and you can change there. I'll be doing the same—fact is I keep a few duds at Minnie's for just such emergencies. Minnie's a good scout and attends strictly to her own business."

The Minnie Lawton Irene referred to held a responsible position with a jobbing house. Grace had met her at lunch with Irene several times and had found her a diverting person.

"Minnie's a broadminded woman," Irene remarked. "I usually meet Tommy at Minnie's when we're going on a party, and that's the schedule for tomorrow evening. I'll call Tommy now and tell him everything's set."

The suit proved to be all Irene had promised when Grace tried it on. She was not unaware that the attendants were observing her with frankly approving eyes.

Beyond a few experiments in her youth for which she was promptly punished, Grace had rarely resorted to deception; but manifestly she would be obliged to harden herself to the practice if she yielded to the temptation to broaden her experiences beyond the knowledge of the home circle. She tried to think of all the calamities that might befall her. Her father or mother might become ill suddenly; an attempt might be made to reach her at the rooms of the French instructor; but instead of being dismayed by this possibility Grace decided that it would be easy enough to explain that she had gone unexpectedly to



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the house of some friends of Irene who were staying late at their country place. She was sure she could make a plausible story of this; and besides, if anyone became so ill as to cause search to be made for her, the fact that she hadn't gone to the French lesson would be forgotten. There might be an automobile accident; the thought was disturbing but it troubled Grace only passingly.

"You'll soon learn to be ready with an alibi if you get caught," said Irene.

III

LIVELY expectations of a novel experience that promised amusement outweighed Grace's scruples before the closing hour of the appointed day. They left the store together and found a taxi to carry them to Minnie Lawton's apartment.

"We'll escape the trolley crowd," said Irene placidly, "and save time. Minnie's not going home for supper but I've got a key to her flat and we'll have the place to ourselves."

Grace and Irene were dressed and waiting when Kemp and his friend Trenton arrived. Assailed at the last moment by misgivings as to the whole adventure, Grace was relieved by her first glimpse of the two men. Kemp was less than her own height, of slender build and with white hair that belied the youthful color in his cheeks. The gray in his neatly trimmed mustache was almost imperceptible. Grace had pictured him of a size commensurate with his importance as the head of one of the largest industries in the city, but he was almost ridiculously small and didn't even remotely suggest the big masterful type she had imagined. His face lighted pleasantly as Irene introduced him. His power was denoted in his firm mouth and more particularly in his clear steady hazel eyes.

"It's so nice that you could come," he said. "I've known of your family a long time, of course, and Irene brags about you a great deal."

In marked contrast to Kemp, Trenton was tall and of athletic build, with gray-blue eyes, and a smile that came a little slowly and had in it something wistful and baffling that piqued curiosity and invited a second glance. Grace appraised his age at about forty. She instantly decided that she preferred him to Kemp; he was less finished, with nothing of Kemp's dapperness. His careless way of thrusting his hands into the pockets of his coat pleased her; he was not thinking about himself, not concerned as to the impression he made; slightly bored perhaps by the whole proceeding.

Trenton had greeted Irene cordially as an old acquaintance and it was evident that the three had met at other parties.

"I'm starving," said Irene; "let's be moving, Tommy."

"Certainly," replied Kemp. "I'm beginning to feel a pang myself."

A chauffeur opened the door of a big limousine that was waiting at the curb. They were quickly speeding countryward with Irene and Grace on the back seat with Trenton between them. Kemp, on one of the adjustable chairs, crossed his legs with the easy nonchalance characteristic of him.

"How's business, Irene?" he asked. "Are the dollars rolling into Shipley's till?"

"My department is running ahead of last year's business," Irene answered, "but there's less call for the best grades."

"So? Same reports all over the country. Well, we can't change business conditions tonight. We'll all die bankrupt if things don't take a brace and we may as well eat and be merry while we can."

Kemp and Irene continued to do most of the talking, occasionally appealing to Grace or Trenton to support them in their good-natured contentions. For a time Kemp and Trenton discussed business as frankly as though they were alone. Grace began to understand what Irene meant when she spoke of knowing men of achievement and enjoying their confidence. Kemp was saying that he was prepared to enlarge his plant the moment business took an upward turn. He meant to strike out more boldly into the South American markets than he had ever done before. His competitors didn't know it, and he didn't want them to know it, but he already had men down there preparing for an aggressive campaign. His tone was optimistic and confident. It was evident that he paid great deference to Trenton's opinions and was anxious for his approval of his plans. Once after Trenton had answered at length and with the care that seemed to be second nature, a technical question as to the production by a new method of castings of a certain kind, Kemp turned and remarked to the young women:

"That answer's worth money! It is a joy to talk to a man who knows his stuff."

"Even I could understand it!" said Grace, "or I thought I did."

Her father sometimes had explained to her problems in mechanics and Trenton had employed terms with which she was familiar.

"I'd rather expect you to know something about such things, Grace," said Kemp. "Your father was a pioneer in certain fields. Stephen Durland, you know Ward. Used to be in the Cummings concern."

"I know the name, of course. I've run across it frequently in the patent office reports. Your father's been a prolific inventor."

"Yes; he's always inventing something, but many of his things don't work!"

"That's true of hundreds," said Kemp, "but certain of Stephen Durland's inventions are still standard. I know, because I've tried to cut under 'em with things of my own! It was a scoundrelly trick for Cummings to put him out of the company—that's what I understand happened. You know I believe every mean thing I hear about Cummings."

"Oh, I suppose it was strictly a business matter," said Grace.

"Beastly ingratitude I'd call it," exclaimed Kemp. "I've been told that your father waived all rights to royalty on all his patents existing when he put them into the company and Cummings only gave him a fifth of the stock in the original corporation to cover everything. Do pardon me! But that whole business made me hot when I heard about it."

"It was pretty hard to bear," Grace murmured.

IV

A WINDING road led from the highway through a strip of woodland that bore upward to a ridge where the lights of the

house burst upon them suddenly. The river, Kemp explained, lay just below.

A Japanese boy in white duck flung open the door and smilingly bowed them in.

Kemp called his place The Shack, but in reality it was a dignified old homestead that had been enlarged and only slightly modernized. The parlor and sitting room of the old part had been thrown into one room with the broad fireplace preserved. The floors were painted and covered with rag rugs and the furniture was of a type that graced the homes of well-to-do Middle Westerners in about the period of the Mexican war. The rooms were lighted by a variety of oil lamps with elaborate frosted chimneys and shades that concealed the electrical source of their illumination.

"Isn't it a peach of a house!" demanded Irene as she conveyed Grace through the lower rooms with a careless air of proprietorship. She led the way up the steep stairway that had been retained as built by the original owner to the rooms above. Concessions to modern convenience and comfort had been made in the sleeping rooms of which there were half a dozen, with white woodwork and wicker furniture in summer cottage style.

"It's all perfectly adorable," cried Grace.

"You've got to hand it to Tommy," remarked Irene, "he does have taste!"

"Maybe—" Grace hesitated and Irene instantly read her thoughts.

"Oh, you're looking for the traces of a woman's hand! Bless your heart, Mrs. Kemp doesn't bother about The Shack! It was Tommy's idea. The family come out for week-ends in the spring and fall and Tommy makes a point of having Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner out here, and Mrs. Kemp invites the guests. I need hardly say"—Irene walked to a chifonier and inspected her face intently in the mirror—"that I've never been invited to these *en famille* functions."

"It seems queer," remarked Grace, dropping her hat on the bed—"I mean it's queer our being here when *she* doesn't know!"

"Why not?" said Irene, surveying herself slowly before the glass. "She'd probably like us if she knew us, and didn't know we work for a living. If Tommy just has to play a little, isn't it nice that he chooses nice little playmates like us? He might do much worse, and get into awful scrapes. You needn't be afraid that the lady of the house will come tearing in and make a fuss. Tommy never takes a chance. Her ladyship's in New York spending a lot of money and having a grand old time. For all we know she's playing around a little bit herself."

"Oh, it wasn't that I was thinking of so much," Grace replied hastily. "I was just thinking that it's like a play, this quaint interesting house hidden away, with all these lovely things, and kind o' funny to think that there is a woman somewhere who belongs here."

"While we're here we belong, my dear. We'll pretend it's all ours. My conscience had awful twinges the first time I came out; but one does somehow get used to things."

At the table, with candles shedding a soft and circumspect light upon the silver and crystal, the talk at once became merry.

"Don't be afraid of the cocktail, Grace," said Kemp, lifting his glass; "only a little orange juice and a very good gin I planted



Two constant dangers— We now know that food must protect us against them

How science has revolutionized the selection of the food we eat

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A familiar food with wonderful health giving properties

Today millions are securing these needed food essentials by adding Fleischmann's Yeast to their regular diet. For yeast is the richest known source of the necessary water-soluble vitamin.

Fleischmann's Yeast stimulates digestion, builds up the body tissues and keeps the body more resistant to disease. In addition, because of its freshness, it helps the intestines in their elimination of poisonous waste matter. You get it fresh every day.

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Eat Fleischmann's Yeast plain or spread it on crackers or bread. Try it in water, hot or cold, or in fruit-juices or milk.

Eat 2 to 3 cakes of Fleischmann's Yeast a day. Have it on the table at home. Have it at your office and eat it at your desk. Ask for it at noon-time at your lunch place. You will like its fresh distinctive flavor and



the clean wholesome taste it leaves in your mouth.

Beware of untested yeast-vitamin preparations that contain drugs or other mixtures. Fleischmann's Yeast is your standard of purity and potency. The familiar tin-foil package with the yellow label is the only form in which Fleischmann's Yeast for Health is sold.

out here in the woods before prohibition."

"When all the rest of the world is dry Tommy'll still have a few bottles put away," said Irene. "There'll be champagne, too! Here's to you, Tommy!"

Grace sipped the cocktail warily, drank a third of it and put it down with a covert glance to see whether the others were watching her.

"We're all entitled to a dividend," said Kemp. "Get busy, Jerry."

Grace was fingering the stem of the cocktail glass, meditating whether she should try it again when Trenton met her gaze. Irene and Kemp were talking

animatedly, quite indifferent to the other members of the party.

"You really don't want that," Trenton said. "If you're not used to it let it alone."

He picked up the glass brimming from the dividend Jerry had poured into it and drained it slowly.

With a smile Grace quickly moved the glass back in front of her plate, glancing at Irene and Kemp to see if they were observing her.

"Thank you ever so much. I really am not used to those things."

"I thought not; otherwise I should have let you alone."

"How did you know?" she asked.

"Oh! it's part of my business to know things without being told. You might say that I earn my living that way."

He seemed amused about something; he constantly seemed secretly amused in a way of his own; but there was no mistaking his wish to be kind, and Grace was grateful for his kindness. The light touch of his fingers as he took the glass from her hand was in itself reassuring.

"We're as good as alone in the midst of a deep, dark forest," she heard Kemp exclaim.

Turning, she saw him bending toward Irene, his arm around her shoulders, kissing her.

Grace Durland sees a new phase of life at this little party and learns a number of things—things about Irene and Kemp and about herself. Her reactions to Trenton's frank admiration and the result of her family's discovery of the fact that she had been to dinner with Irene and two men are told in the next instalment of this vitally interesting novel in the FEBRUARY COSMOPOLITAN

December Love

(Continued from page 67)

Not many minutes later she was seated at a table in a corner of the restaurant at the Café Royal and was carefully choosing a dinner.

The more he thought over his visit to Adela Sellingworth the more certain did Francis Braybrooke become that it had not gone off well. Her final dismissal of the subject of young Craven's possible happiness with Beryl Van Tuyn, if circumstances should ever bring them together, had been very abrupt. She had really almost kicked it out of the conversation.

But then she had never been fond of discussing love affairs. Braybrooke had noticed that.

As he considered the matter he began to feel rather uneasy. Was it possible that Adela Sellingworth—his mind hesitated, then took the unpleasant leap—that Adela Sellingworth was beginning to like young Craven in an unsuitable way?

Craven certainly had behaved oddly when Adela Sellingworth had been discussed between them, and when Craven had been the subject of discussion with Adela Sellingworth she had behaved curiously. There was something behind it all. Of that Braybrooke was convinced. But his perplexity and doubt increased to something like agitation a few days later when he met a well-born woman of his acquaintance, who had "gone in for" painting and living her own life, and had become a bit of a Bohemian. She happened to mention that she had seen his friend, "that wonderful looking Lady Sellingworth," dining at the *Bella Napoli* on a recent evening. Naturally Braybrooke supposed that the allusion was to the night of Lady Sellingworth's dinner with Beryl Van Tuyn, and he spoke of the lovely girl as Lady Sellingworth's companion. But his informant, looking rather surprised, told him that Lady Sellingworth had been with a very handsome young man, and, on discreet inquiry being made, gave an admirable description, from the painter's point of view, of Craven.

Braybrooke said nothing, but he was secretly almost distressed. He thought it

such a mistake for his distinguished friend to go wandering about in Soho alone with a mere boy. It was undignified. It was not the thing. He could not understand it unless really she were losing her head. And then he remembered her past. Although he never spoke of it, and now seldom thought about it, Braybrooke knew very well what sort of woman Adela Sellingworth had been. But her dignified life of ten years had really almost wiped her former escapades out of his recollection. There seemed to be a gulf fixed between the professional beauty and the white-haired recluse of Berkeley Square. When he looked at her, sat with her now, if he ever gave a thought to her past it was accompanied, or immediately followed, by a mental question: "Was it *she* who did that? or "Can *she* ever have been like that?"

But now Braybrooke uneasily began to remember Lady Sellingworth's past reputation and to think of the Old Guard.

If she were to fall back into folly now, after what she had done ten years ago, the Old Guard would show her no mercy. Her character would be torn to pieces. He regretted very much his introduction of Craven into her life. But how could he have thought that she would fascinate a boy?

After much careful thought—for he took his social responsibilities and duties very seriously—he resolved to take action on the lines which had occurred to him when he first began to be anxious about Craven's feeling towards Adela Sellingworth; he resolved to do his best to bring Beryl Van Tuyn and Craven together.

He took out his watch and looked at it. Half past three! He thought of the Wallace collection. It seemed to draw him strangely just then. He put his watch back and walked towards Manchester Square.

He had gained the Square and was about to enter the enclosure before Hertford House by the gateway on the left when he saw Miss Van Tuyn come out by the gateway on the right, and walk slowly away towards Oxford Street in deep conversation with a small horsey-looking man, whose face he could not see, but whose back and legs, and whose dress and headgear, strongly

suggested to him the ring at Newmarket and the Paddock at Ascot.

Braybrooke hesitated. The attraction of the Wallace collection no longer drew him. Besides it was getting late. On the other hand, he scarcely liked to interrupt an earnest tête-à-tête but he did want to talk to Miss Van Tuyn.

So Braybrooke did a thing he had never done before; he "dogged" two human beings, walking with infinite precaution.

His quarry presently turned into the thronging crowds of Oxford Street, and made towards the Marble Arch keeping to the right hand pavement. Braybrooke saw his opportunity. He dodged across the road to an island, waited there till a policeman, extending a woolen thumb, stopped the traffic, then gained the opposite pavement, hurried decorously on that side towards the Marble Arch, and after a sprint of perhaps a couple of hundred yards recrossed the street almost at the risk of his life, and walked warily back towards Oxford Circus keeping his eyes wide open.

Before many minutes had passed he discerned the graceful and athletic figure of Miss Van Tuyn coming towards him; then, immediately afterwards, he caught a glimpse of a blue-shaven face with an aquiline nose beside her, and realized that the man he had taken for a jockey was Dick Garstin, the famous painter.

As Braybrooke knew everyone he of course knew Garstin, and he wondered now why he had not recognized his back in Manchester Square. But now the recognition gave him pause, and he almost wished he had not taken so much trouble to meet Miss Van Tuyn and her companion, for he could say nothing he wanted to say while Garstin was there; and the man was so damnably unconventional, in fact so downright rude, and so totally devoid of all delicacy, all insight in social matters, that even if he saw that Braybrooke wanted a quiet word with Miss Van Tuyn he would probably not let him have it. However, it was too late now to avoid the steadily advancing couple. Miss Van Tuyn had seen Braybrooke and sent him a smile. In a moment he was face to face with them and she stopped to greet him.



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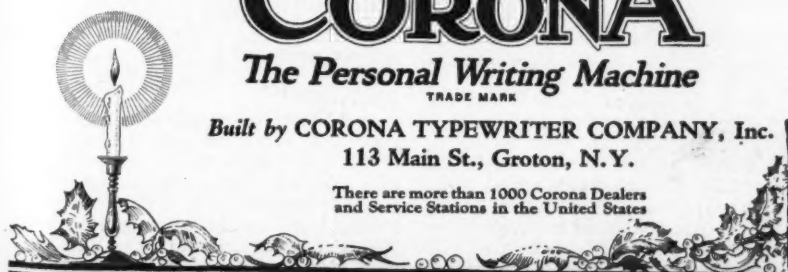
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"I have been spending an hour at the Wallace collection with Mr. Garstin," she said, "and quarreling with him all the time. He actually pretends to dislike the Fragonards."

"Ah! how are you?" said Braybrooke, addressing the painter with almost exaggerated cordiality.

Garstin nodded in his usual offhand way. He did not dislike Braybrooke. When Braybrooke was there he perceived him, having eyes, and having ears heard his voice. But hitherto Braybrooke had never succeeded in conveying any impression to the mind of Garstin.

"May I—shall I be in the way if I turn back with you for a few steps?" he ventured, with the sort of side glance at Garstin that a male dog gives to another male dog while walking round and round on a first meeting. "It is such a pleasure to see you."

Here he threw very definite admiration into the eyes which he fixed on Miss Van Tuyn.

She responded automatically and begged him to accompany them.

"Dick is leaving me at the Marble Arch," she said. "The reason he gives is that he is going to take a Turkish bath in the Harrow Road. But that is a lie that even an American girl brought up in Paris is unable to swallow. What are you really going to do, Dick?"

"Good by both of you!" said Garstin abruptly.

"But we haven't got to the Marble Arch!"

"What's that got to do with it? I'm off."

He seemed to be going, then stopped, and directed the two pin points of light at Miss Van Tuyn.

"I flatly refuse to make an Academy portrait of you, so don't hope for it," he said. "But if you come along to the studio tomorrow afternoon you may possibly find me at work on a blackmailer."

"Dick!" said Miss Van Tuyn, in a voice which startled Braybrooke.

"I don't promise," said the painter. "I don't believe in promises, unless you break 'em. But it's just on the cards."

"What time, Dick?" said Miss Van Tuyn rather eagerly.

"You might look in about three."

"I will. That's a bargain."

Garstin turned on his heel and tramped away towards Berkeley Street.

"You are going home by Park Lane?" said Braybrooke, feeling greatly relieved, but still rather upset.

"Yes. But why don't you take me somewhere to tea?"

"Nothing I should like better. Where shall we go?"

"Let's go to the Ritz. I had meant to walk, but let us take a taxi."

There was certainly a change in Miss Van Tuyn. Braybrooke noticed it at once. She seemed suddenly restless, almost excited and as if she were in a hurry.

"There's one!" she added, lifting her tightly furled umbrella.

The driver stopped and in a moment they were on their way to the Ritz.

The first person his eyes lit on as they walked towards the tea tables was Fanny Cronin, comfortably seated in an immense armchair, devouring a muffin in the company of an old lady, whose determined face was completely covered with a crisscross of wrinkles, and whose

Cosmopolitan for January, 1922

withered hands were flashing with magnificent rings.

"Oh, old Fanny with Mrs. Clem Hodson!" said Miss Van Tuyn. "She's a school friend of Fanny's from Philadelphia. Let us go to that table in the far corner. I'll just speak to them while you order tea."

"But I thought Miss Cronin never went out."

"She never does, except with Mrs. Clem, unless I want her."

He ordered tea, then sat down anxiously to wait for Miss Van Tuyn. From his corner he watched her colloquy with the two school friends from Philadelphia, and it seemed to him that something very important was being said. For Fanny Cronin looked almost animated, and her manner approached the emphatic as she spoke to the standing girl. Mrs. Hodson seemed to take very little part in the conversation, but sat looking very determined and almost imperious as she listened. And presently Braybrooke saw her extremely observant dark eyes, small, protuberant, and round as buttons, turn swiftly, with even, he thought, a darting movement, in his direction.

But at this moment Miss Van Tuyn came away to him, and their tea was brought by a waiter.

He thought she cast a rather satirical look at him as she sat down, but she only said:

"Dear old things! They are very happy together. Mrs. Clem is extraordinarily proud of having 'got Fanny out,' as she calls it. A boy who had successfully drawn a badger couldn't be more triumphant. Now let's forget them!"

"I was interested," said Braybrooke clasping his beard and looking away from his companion, "to hear the other day that a young friend of mine had met you, a very charming and promising young fellow, who has a great career before him, unless I am much mistaken."

"Who?" she asked—he thought rather curiously.

"Alick Craven of the Foreign office. He told me he was introduced to you at Adela Sellingworth's."

"Oh yes, he was," said Miss Van Tuyn. And she said no more.

"He was very enthusiastic about you," ventured Braybrooke, wondering how to interpret her silence.

"Really!"

"Yes. We belong to the same club, the St. James's. He entertained me for more than an hour with your praises."

Miss Van Tuyn looked at him with rather acute inquiry, as if she could not make up her mind about something with which he was closely concerned.

"He would like to meet you again," said Braybrooke, with soft firmness.

"But I have met him again two or three times. He called on me."

"And I understand you were together in a restaurant in—Soho I think it was."

"Yes, we were."

"What did you think of him?" asked Braybrooke.

As he put the question he was quite aware that he was being far from subtle.

"He seems quite a nice sort of boy," said Miss Van Tuyn, still looking rather coldly inquisitive, as if she were secretly puzzled but intended to emerge into complete understanding before she had done with Braybrooke. "His Foreign Office



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you hear something—

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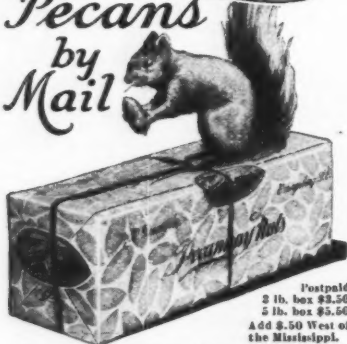
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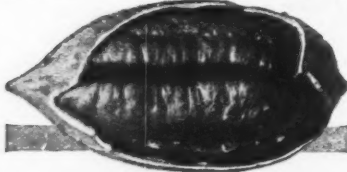


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manner is rather against him. But perhaps someday he'll grow out of that—unless it becomes accentuated."

"I half promised Craven the other day," he lied, "to contrive another meeting between you and him. But I fear he has bored you. And in that case perhaps I ought not to hold to my promise. You meet so many brilliant Frenchmen that I daresay our slower, but really I sometimes think deeper, mentality scarcely appeals to you."

"Perhaps you are right," said Miss Van Tuyn. "I remember a very brilliant American, who knew practically all the nations of Europe, telling me that in his opinion you English were the subtlest—I'm afraid he was rude enough to say the most artful—of the lot."

"Perhaps it is our own fault," he said. "But I think we English are often misunderstood."

Miss Cronin was now standing up and apparently disputing the bill, for she was evidently talking at great length to a man in livery, who had a slip of paper in his hand, and who occasionally pointed to it in a respectful manner and said something, whereupon Miss Cronin made negative gestures and there was much tossing and shaking of heads. Resolutely Braybrooke looked away. It was nothing to do with him even if the Ritz was trying to make an overcharge for plum cake.

The line showed itself in Miss Van Tuyn's forehead.

"Will you be kind and please tell her that I am not coming back yet as I am going to call on Lady Sellingworth when I leave here."

Braybrooke got up, trying to conceal his reluctance to obey.

"Is anything the matter?" asked Miss Van Tuyn when he rejoined her. "Has old Fanny been tiresome?"

"Oh no—no! But old Fan—I beg your pardon, I mean Miss Cronin—Miss Cronin has a peculiar—but she is very charming. I gave her your message and she quite understood. We were talking about plum cake."

"I see! A fascinating subject like that must be difficult to get away from."

"Yes—very! What a delightful woman Mrs. Hodson is."

"I think her extremely wearisome. Her nature is as wrinkled as her face. And now I must be on my way to Adela Sellingworth's."

"May I walk with you as far as her door?"

"Of course."

When they were out in Piccadilly he said: "And now what about my promise to Mr. Craven?"

"I shall be delighted to meet him again," said Miss Van Tuyn, in a careless voice. "And I would not have you break a promise on my account. Such a sacred thing!"

"But if he bores you—"

"He doesn't bore me more than many young men do."

"Then I will let you know. We might have a theater party."

"Anything you like. And why not ask Adela Sellingworth to make a fourth?"

The suggestion was not at all to Braybrooke's liking, but he scarcely knew what to say in answer to it.

"I am so fond of her," continued Miss Van Tuyn. "And I'm sure she would enjoy it."

"But she so seldom goes out."

"All the more reason to try to persuade her out of her shell. I believe she will come if you tell her I and Mr. Craven make up the rest of the party. We all got on so well together in Soho."

"I will certainly ask her," said Braybrooke.

What else could he say?

At the corner of Berkeley Square Miss Van Tuyn stopped and rather resolutely bade him good by.

Lady Sellingworth was "not at home" when Miss Van Tuyn called, though no doubt she was in the house, and the latter left her card, on which she wrote in pencil: "So sorry not to find you. Do let us meet again soon. I may not be in London much longer." When she wrote the last sentence she was really thinking of Paris with a certain irritation of desire. In Paris she always had a good, even a splendid, time. London was treating her badly. Perhaps it was hardly worth while to stay on. She had many adorers in Paris, and no elderly women there ever got in her way. Frenchmen never ran after elderly women. She could not conceive of any young Frenchman doing what Craven had done if offered the choice between a girl of twenty-two and a woman of sixty. Englishmen really were incomprehensible. Was it worth while to bother about them? Probably not. But she was by nature combative as well as vain, and Craven's behavior had certainly given him a greater value in her estimation. If he had done the quite ordinary thing and fallen in love with her at once, she might have been pleased and yet have thought very little of him. He would then have been in a class with many others. Now he was decidedly in a class by himself. If he loved he would not be an ordinary lover. She was angry with him. She intended some day to punish him. But he puzzled her, and very definitely now he attracted her.

No; really she would not go back to Paris of the open arms and the comprehensible behavior without coming to conclusions with Craven. To do so would be to retreat practically beaten from the field, and she had never yet acknowledged a defeat.

Besides she had something in prospect, something that for the moment at any rate would hold her in London even without the attraction, half-repellent, of Craven. Evidently Dick Garstin, for whatever reason, had done something, or was about to do something, for her. She felt almost sure that he had done what she wished and that tomorrow afternoon in Glebe Place she would meet the man to whom she had offered the shilling.

That would be distinctly amusing. She felt on the edge of a rather uncommon adventure.

On the following day, very soon after three, she pushed the bell outside Garstin's studio door in Glebe Place. It was not answered immediately and, feeling impatient, she rang again without waiting long. Garstin opened the door, and smiled rather maliciously on seeing her.

"What a hurry you're in!" he said. "Come along in my girl."

As he shut the heavy door behind her she turned in the lobby and said:

"Well, Dick?"

"I'm working in the upstairs studio," he returned blandly.



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"What are you at work on?"

"Go up and you'll see for yourself."

She hastened through the studio on the ground floor, mounted the wide staircase swiftly, and came into another large studio built out at the back of the building. Here Garstin worked on his portraits, and here she expected to come face to face with the living bronze. As she drew near to the entrance of the studio she felt positive that he was waiting for her. But when she reached it, and looked quickly and expectantly round, she saw at once that the great room was empty.

Evidently Garstin had stopped below for a moment in the ground floor studio, but she now heard his heavy tramp on the stairs behind her and turned almost angrily.

"Dick, is this intended for a joke?"

"Why don't you take off your hat?"

But for once Miss Van Tuyn's vanity was not on the alert; for once she did not care whether Garstin admired her head or not.

"I shall not take off my hat," she said, brusquely. "I don't intend to stay unless there is the reason which I expected and which induced me to come here. Have you seen that remarkable looking man again or not?"

"I have," said Garstin, with a mischievous smile.

Miss Van Tuyn looked slightly mollified, but still uncertain.

"Did you speak to him?" she asked.

"I told him who I was, and what I wanted with him, and that I wanted it with him at three this afternoon. He's got the address. But whether we have any reason to expect him is more than I can say."

She looked quickly at the watch on her wrist.

"It is just half past three. I was late."

After an instant of silence she sat down on an old-fashioned sofa covered with dull green and red silk. Just behind it on an easel stood a half-finished portrait of the Cora woman, staring with hungry eyes over an empty tumbler.

"Give me a cigarette, Dick," she said.

"Did he say he would come?"

"I explained that I occasionally painted portraits and that I wished to make a study of his damned remarkable head. Upon that he handed me his card. Here it is."

And Garstin drew out of a side pocket a visiting card which he gave to Miss Van Tuyn.

She read, "Nicholas Arabian."

There was no address in the corner.

"What a curious name."

She sat gazing at the card and smoking her cigarette.

At this moment an electric bell sounded below.

"There he is!" said Miss Van Tuyn.

"Do go down quickly and let him in, or he may think it is all a hoax and go away."

The painter stood looking at her keenly, with his hands in his pockets and his strong, thin legs rather wide apart.

"Well at any rate you're damned unconventional," he said. "At this moment you even look unconventional. What are your eyes shining about?"

"Dick—do go!"

She laid a hand on his arm. There was a strong grip in her fingers.

"This is a little adventure. And I love an adventure," she said.

"I only hope it ends badly," said Garstin, as he turned towards the staircase. "He's more patient than you. He hasn't rung twice."

"I believe he's gone!" she said, almost angrily as he disappeared down the stairs.

Presently she heard the front door open and listened. Dick Garstin's big bass voice said in an offhand tone:

"Halloh! thought you weren't coming! Glad to see you. Come along in!"

"I know I am late," said a warm voice, the voice of a man. "For me this place has been rather difficult to find. I am not well acquainted with the painters' quarters of London."

A door banged heavily.

"Up those stairs right ahead of you!" said Garstin.

Miss Van Tuyn quickly drew back and sat down again on the sofa. An instant after she had done so the living bronze appeared at the top of the stairs, and his big brown eyes rested on her. No expression either of surprise, or of anything else, came into his face as he saw her. And she realized immediately that whatever else this man was he was supremely self-possessed. Yet he had turned away from her shilling. Why was that? In that moment she began to wonder about him. As Garstin joined him Miss Van Tuyn slowly got up from her sofa.

"A friend of mine—Beryl Van Tuyn," said Garstin. "Come to have a look round at what I'm up to." (He glanced at Miss Van Tuyn.) "Mr. Arabian," he added. "Take off your coat, won't you? Throw it anywhere."

Arabian bowed to Miss Van Tuyn, still looking formal and as if she were a total stranger whom he had never set eyes on before. She bowed to him. As she did so she thought that he was a little older than she had supposed. He was certainly over thirty. She wondered about his nationality and suspected that very mixed blood ran in his veins.

He obeyed Garstin's suggestion, took off his coat, and laid it with his hat, gloves and stick on a chair close to the staircase. Then for the first time he spoke to Miss Van Tuyn, who was still standing.

"I always love a studio, Mademoiselle," he said. "And when Mr. Garstin"—he pronounced the name with careful clearness—"was good enough to invite me to his I was very thankful. His pictures are famous."

"Are you going to allow me to paint you?" he said to Arabian. "That's what I'm after. I should like to do a head of you. I could make something of it—something—yes!"

He still stared with concentrated attention, and suddenly a faint whistle came from his lips. Without removing his eyes from Arabian he whistled several times a little tune of five notes, like the song of a thrush. Arabian meanwhile returned his gaze rather doubtfully, slightly smiling. "Ever been painted?" said Garstin, at last.

"No, never. Once I have sat to a sculptor for the figure. But that was when I was very young. I was something of an athlete as a boy."

"I should say so," said Garstin. "Well, what do you think, eh?"

In reply to Garstin's question Arabian asked another question.

"You wish to make a portrait of me?"

"I do—in oils."

"Will it take long?"

"I couldn't say. I might be a week over it, or less, or more. I shall want you every day."

"And when it is done?" said Arabian.

"What happens to it?"

"If it's up to the mark—my mark—I shall want to exhibit it."

Arabian said nothing for a moment. He seemed to be thinking rather seriously, and presently his large eyes turned towards Miss Van Tuyn for an instant, almost, she thought, as if they wished to consult her, to read in her eyes something which might help him to a decision. She felt that the man was flattered by Garstin's request, but she felt also that something—she did not know what—held him back from granting it. And again she wondered about him.

Finally, as if coming to a conclusion as to what he considered it wise to do for the moment, Arabian said:

"Excuse me, but are these pictures which I see portraits painted by you?"

"Every one of them," said Garstin, rather roughly and impatiently.

"Will you allow me to look at them?"

"They're there to be looked at."

Again Arabian glanced at Miss Van Tuyn. She got up from the sofa quickly.

"I will show Mr. Arabian the pictures," she said.

She had noticed the cloud lowering on Garstin's face and knew that he was irritated by Arabian's hesitation. As Garstin had once said to her he could be "sensitive," although his manners were often rough, and his face was what is usually called a "hard" face. He was now obviously in a surly temper, and Miss Van Tuyn knew from experience that when resisted he was quite capable of an explosion. How, she wondered, would Arabian face an outburst from Garstin. She could not tell. But she thought it wise if possible to avoid anything disagreeable. So she came forward smiling.

"That will be very kind," said Arabian, in his soft and warm voice, and with his marked, but charming foreign accent. "I am not expert in these matters."

Garstin pushed up his lips in a sort of sneer. Miss Van Tuyn sent him a look, and for once he heeded a wish of hers.

"I'll be back in a minute," he said.

"Have a good stare at my stuff, and if you don't like it why, damn it, you're free to say so!"

Miss Van Tuyn's look had sent him away down the stairs to the ground floor studio. Arabian had not missed her message, but he was apparently quite impassive, and did not show that he had noticed the painter's ill humor.

For the first time Miss Van Tuyn was quite alone with the living bronze.

"Do you know much about pictures?" she asked him.

"Not very much," he answered, with a long soft look at her. "I have only one way to judge them."

"And what way is that?"

"If they are portraits, I mean."

"Yes?"

"I judge them by their humanity. One does not want to be made worse than one is in a picture."

"I'm afraid you won't like Dick Garstin's work," she said, decisively.



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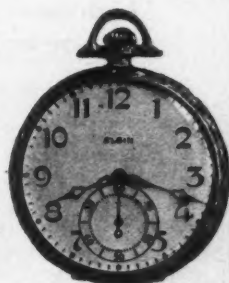
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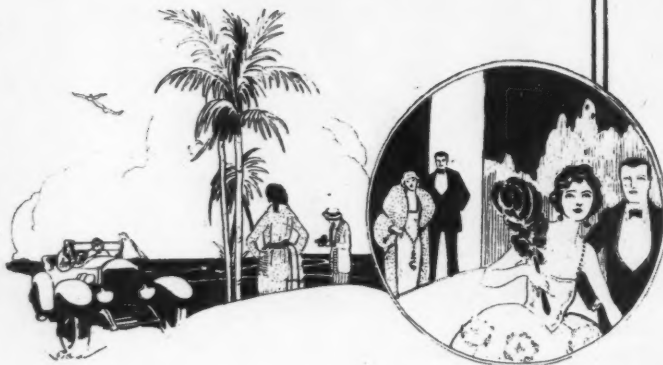
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She was rather disappointed. Had this audaciously handsome man a cult for the pretty-pretty?

"Let us see!" he replied, smiling.

He looked round the big studio. As he did so she noticed that he had an extraordinarily quick and all-seeing glance, and realized that in some way, in some direction, he must be clever, even exceptionally clever. There were some eight or ten canvases displayed, a few finished, others half finished, or only just begun.

"But they are all women and all of a certain world!" he said, almost suspiciously. "Why is that?"

"Garstin is passing through a phase just now. He paints from the Café Royal."

"Oh!"

He paused, and his brown face took on a look of rather hard meditation.

"Does he never paint what they call decent people?" he inquired. "One may occasionally spend an hour at the Café Royal—especially if one is not English—without belonging to the *bas-fonds*. I do not know whether Mr. Dick Garstin understands that."

"Of course he does," she said, instantly grasping the meaning of his hesitation.

"The question is," he added, "whether one wishes to be painted as bad when perhaps one is not so bad. Many people, I think, might fear to be painted by this very famous Mr. Dick Garstin."

"Would you be afraid to be painted by him?" she said.

He cast a sharp side glance at her with eyes which looked suddenly vigilant.

"I did not say that."

"He'll be furious if you refuse."

"I see he is accustomed generally to have what he wishes."

"Yes. And he would make a magnificent thing of you. I am certain of that."

She saw vanity looking out of his eyes and her vanity felt suddenly almost strangely at home with it.

"It's a compliment, I know, that he should wish to paint me," said Arabian. "But why does he?"

The question sounded to Miss Van Tuyn almost suspicious.

"He admires your appearance," she answered. "He thinks you a very striking type."

"Ah! A type! But what of?"

"He didn't tell me," she answered.

Arabian was silent for a moment; then he said,

"Does Mr. Dick Garstin get high prices for his portraits? Are they worth a great deal?"

"Yes," she said, with a sudden light touch of disdain, which she could not forego. "The smallest sketch of a head painted by him will fetch a lot of money."

"Ah—indeed!"

"Let him paint you! There he is—coming back."

As Garstin reappeared Arabian turned to him with a smile that looked cordial and yet that seemed somehow wanting in real geniality.

"I have seen them all."

"Have you? Well, let's have a drink."

He went over to the Spanish cabinet, and brought out of it a flagon of old English glassware, soda water, and three tall, tulip shaped glasses with long stems.

"Come on! Let's sit down!" he said, setting them down on a table. "I'll get

the cigars. Squat here, Beryl. Here's a chair for you, Arabian. Help yourselves!"

He moved off and returned with a box of his deadly cigars. Arabian took one without hesitation, and accepted a stiff whisky and soda. While he had been downstairs Garstin had apparently recovered his good humor, or had deliberately made up his mind to take a certain line with his guest from the Café Royal. He said nothing about his pictures, made no further allusion to his wish to paint Arabian's portrait, but flung himself down, lit a cigar, and began to drink and smoke and talk, very much as if he were in the bar of an inn with a lot of good fellows.

For his own benefit, and incidentally for hers, Garstin was carelessly, but cleverly, trying to find out things about Arabian, not things about his life, but things about his education, and his mind, and his temperament. He talked about London, which Arabian apparently knew fairly well, though he said he had never lived long in London; then about Paris which Arabian also knew, and spoke of like a man who visited it now and then for purposes of pleasure. Then Garstin spoke of the art he followed, of the old Italian painters and of the Galleries of Italy. Arabian became very quiet. His attitude and bearing were those of one almost respectfully listening to an expert holding forth on a subject he had made his own.

"Work—it's the thing in life!" roared Garstin. "It's the great consolation for all the damnableness of the human existence. Work first and the love of women second!"

"Thank you very much for your chivalry, Dick," said Miss Van Tuyn, sending one of her most charming blue glances to the living bronze, who returned it, almost eagerly, she thought.

"And the love of women betrays," continued Garstin. "But work never lets you down."

He flung out his right arm and quoted sonorously from Pissarro: "*Le travail est un merveilleux régulateur de santé morale et physique. La souffrance n'a de prise que sur les paresseux*. I paint portraits because doing it helps me to live!" he almost shouted.

And he returned to the subject of women, and spoke on it so freely and fully, that Miss Van Tuyn presently pulled him up. Rather to her surprise he showed unusual meekness under her interruption.

"All right, my girl! I've done! I've done! But I always forget you're not a young man."

"*Ma foi!*" said Arabian, almost under his breath.

Garstin looked across at him.

"She's a Tartar! She'd keep the devil himself in order."

"He deserves restraint far less than you do," said Miss Van Tuyn.

"She won't leave me alone," continued Garstin, flinging one leg over the arm of his easy chair. "She even attacks me about my painting, says I only paint the rats of the sewers."

"I never said that!" said Miss Van Tuyn. "I said you were a painter of the underworld, and so you are."

"But Mr. Dick Garstin also paints judges, Mademoiselle," said Arabian.

"Oh Lord! Drop the Mister! I'm

Dick Garstin *tout court* or I'm nothing. Now, Arabian, you know the reason, part of the reason, why I want to stick you on canvas."

"You mean because—"

He seemed to hesitate, and touched his little Guardsman's mustache.

"Because you're a jolly fine subject and nothing to do with the darlings that live in the sewers."

"Ah! Thank you!" said Arabian. "But you paint judges!"

"I only put that red-faced old ruffian here as a joke. Directly I set eyes on him I knew he ought to have been in quod himself! Come now, what do you say? Look here! I'll make a bargain with you. I'll give you the thing when it's done."

Miss Van Tuyn looked at Garstin in amazement, and missed the sudden gleam of light that came into Arabian's eyes. But Garstin did not miss it and repeated:

"I'll give you the thing! Now what do you say? Is it a bargain?"

"But how can I accept?" said Arabian, quickly adding, "And how can I refuse? Mr.—"

"Drop the Mister, I say!"

"Dick Garstin then!"

"That's better."

"I wish to tell you that I am not a connoisseur of art. On the other hand, please, I have an eye for what is fine. Mademoiselle I hope will say it is so?"

He looked at Miss Van Tuyn.

"Mr. Arabian made some remarkably cute remarks about the portraits, Dick," she said, in reply to the glance.

"I care for a fine painting so much that really I do not know how to refuse the temptation you offer me—Dick Garstin."

Garstin poured himself out another whisky.

"I'll start on it tomorrow," he said, staring hard at the man who had now become definitely his subject.

Soon afterwards Arabian got up and said he must go. As he said this he looked pleadingly at Miss Van Tuyn. But she sat still in her chair, a cigarette between her lips. He said goodbye to her formally. Garstin went down with Arabian to let him out, and was away for three or four minutes. From her chair Miss Van Tuyn heard a murmur of voices, then presently a loud bass: "Tomorrow morning at eleven sharp!" then the bang of a door. A minute later Garstin bounded up the stairs heavily, yet with a strong agility.

"I've got him, my girl! He's afraid of it like the devil, but I've got him. I hit on the only way. I found the only bait which my fish would take. Now for another cigar!"

He seized the box.

"Did you see his eyes when I said I'd give him the picture?"

"No; I was looking at you."

"Then you missed revelation. I had diagnosed him all right."

"Tell me your diagnosis."

"I told it to you long ago. That fellow is a being of the underworld."

Miss Van Tuyn slightly reddened.

"I wonder!" she said. "I'm not at all sure that you're right, Dick."

"What did you gather when I put him through his paces just now?" he asked, sending out clouds of strong smelling smoke.

"Oh—I don't know! Not very much. He seems to have been about, to have plenty of money."

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"And no education. He doesn't know a thing about pictures, painters. Just at first I thought he might have been a model. Not a bit of it! Books mean nothing to him. What that chap has studied is the pornographic book of life, my girl. He has no imagination. His feelings run straight in the direction of sensuality. He's as ignorant and as clever as they're made. He's never done a stroke of honest work in his life and despises all those who are fools enough to toil, me among them. He is as acquisitive as a monkey and a magpie rolled into one. His constitution is made of iron and I dare say his nerves are made of steel. He's a rare one, I tell you, and I'll make a rare picture of him."

"I don't know whether you are right, Dick."

Garstin seemed quite unaffected by her doubt of his power to read character. Perhaps at that moment he was coolly reading hers, and laughing to himself about women. But if so he did not show it. And she said in a moment,

"You are really going to give him the portrait?"

"Yes, when I've exhibited it. Not before, of course. The gentleman isn't going to have it all his own way."

Miss Van Tuyn looked rather thought-

Strangely stirred by the loyal friendship—if nothing more—of Craven, yet realizing the peaceful companionship which a marriage with Sir Seymour would bring to her, Lady Sellingworth realizes that a crisis must come—a decision must be made. Beryl Van Tuyn, also, aware of Arabian's frank admiration—love, Garstin called it—and strongly impelled by a half-fearful feeling of admiration for him—"purely physical," said Garstin—has to make up her mind how far she is willing to let this curious acquaintance carry her. Both Lady Sellingworth and Beryl Van Tuyn solve their problems in the next instalment of this remarkable novel in the FEBRUARY COSMOPOLITAN.

Nine O'Clock Tomorrow

(Concluded from page 48)

young woman tremendously. Perhaps it was on account of the suicide that she was leaving England. Who knows? All mere supposition, of course. I tried to get hold of Ollinson's mother. She'd died. I tried everything. I got on the traces of about nineteen girls that Ollinson was supposed to have been interested in. But mine didn't happen to be among them. And I can tell you that none of the others was the least bit like her, either."

A silence.

"Why didn't she come back the next day?" Devra said, half to himself.

"God knows. Perhaps afraid. Perhaps she had a sense of duty elsewhere . . . She may have been run over. People are run over every day. . . . If she's alive now she's over sixty—she's just a ruin of the girl I knew. She may be a grandmother. It's forty years ago. A long time."

Another silence.

"I think you've never married, Mr. Field," said Devra, lapsing slightly from good taste. Devra had his moments of crudity.

"No."

"It's so long ago I suppose it seems to you now as if it had happened to somebody else and not to you."

"Nothing of the kind," Field answered with strange curtness. "It happened to me."

Soon afterwards Devra rose to depart.

"We may as well walk down," said Field, as he switched on the staircase lights.

Cosmopolitan for January, 1922

ful, even preoccupied. Almost immediately afterwards she got up to go.

"Coming tomorrow?" he said.

"What—to see you paint?"

"Coming?"

"You really mean that I may?"

"I do. You'll help me."

She looked rather startled and then, immediately, keenly curious.

"I don't see how."

"No reason you should! Now off with you! I've got things to do."

"Then good by."

As she was going away she stopped for a moment before the portrait of the judge.

"He found out why you painted that portrait."

"Arabian?" said Garstin.

"Yes. And he said something about it that wasn't stupid."

"What was that?"

"He said it was more than the portrait of one man, that it was a portrait of the world's hypocrisy."

"Damned good!" said Garstin with a sonorous chuckle. "And his portrait will be more than the portrait of one man."

"Yes?" she said, looking eagerly at him.

But he would not say anything more, and she went away full of a deep curiosity, but thankful that she had decided to stay on in London.

Devra followed slowly, glancing at the pictures on the staircase walls, which Field had not as yet shown to him.

"This is it," said Field, halting on the first floor landing.

There hung the unfinished portrait. Devra examined it intently. A work youthful but masterly. . . . Yes, a lovely creature in the demoded frock and funny bonnet—tantalizing, mysterious, virginal, voluptuous, acquiescent. . . . The wet mouth! . . . Worth no doubt a couple of thousand pounds at Christie's.

"I hung it there," said Field, "because it was just there—it was just there—she stopped and—told me I'd been very good to her."

Outside Devra stood and looked at the beautiful silhouetted Corinthian façade of the famous church rising from the silence of the Square hugely against a soft sky. And he heard Raphael Field shooting the bolts within. Tomorrow night the decrepit old fellow with his dignified smile, half boyish and half senile, would no doubt be dining forlornly alone once more at the club. What a life! What a career! What a memory! The decrepit old fellow had created masterpieces; and he had lived. Devra, walking thoughtfully in the direction of his immense and perfectly appointed home, reflected that though he, Devra, had got much in this world he had not got quite everything. He was a little disturbed in his complacency to find himself envying Raphael Field.

The Woman Trap

(Continued from page 56)

Manhasset, and that we had been together alone before—I suppose she means that time, in her apartment. It looks as though I had been caught in a trap, but can I make a jury believe it? Jim, my lawyer says, offers me a big sum in cash if I will let things go through quietly—as though I would take a cent of his money.

If the thing goes to a fight, my life is ruined, no matter how the case turns out. The thought of going on the stand and telling the whole wretched story before a gaping crowd makes me sick at heart. I believe I'd rather die first.

Sunday

I'm tired—terribly tired. I feel like creeping away somewhere and beginning life all over again. Jim's lawyers are insistent that I decide about the divorce. They have begun to threaten me. Eva has left town. I don't know where Jim is. And Mr. Andrews, it seems, has taken his wife and child and gone to Europe. The coward! I am alone.

I begin to feel that it would demean me less to let Jim have the divorce than to soil my hands by fighting him. I loathe and despise him. I hope I shall never see him again.

I shall leave here tomorrow.

Thursday

Thank God I am no longer Mrs. James Hardy! The referee granted Jim an absolute divorce yesterday. I did not contest the case, and the papers are sealed. Nobody knows anything about it—even the newspapers said nothing. Jim's money is responsible for that. He sent me a big check, but I refused it. I prefer to work for a living.

Monday

At last I understand—everything. Jim and Eva Hollingsworth were married today. The wretched, miserable snake! I suppose I should be justified in killing her. I see now that she planned it all from the very first. She and Jim. I wish them joy of their bargain, but I would rather be in my position than in hers.

Dr. Garvin stared at the written page, a very grim expression on his handsome face. An interne came into the room.

"Doctor," he said, "I think you had better take a look at that patient in Number Seven—Mrs. Hardy."

"Hardy!" The doctor sprang to his feet.

"Why, yes, sir. Mrs. James Hardy. The abdominal case you operated this afternoon. She's conscious now. You asked us to let you know. Pretty far gone, I'm afraid. Her husband hasn't answered our wire. Delirious for a time. Kept asking the nurse to send for somebody named Copeland."

"I'll see her at once." Dr. Garvin strode to the door. In it he met Aileen.

"You—you've read it?" she asked timidly, noting the grimness of his face.

"Yes." He turned to the interne. "Go up, Eagan," he said. "I'll join you in a moment." When the man had gone he swept Aileen into his arms. "You poor child," he whispered, and kissed her. "I understand—everything."



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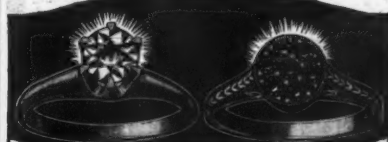
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"And you—believe?"

"I believe in you. I have always believed in you. I love you. Come—that woman in Number Seven has been asking for you."

"For me? But—how did she know I was here?"

"She didn't. Wanted them to send for you. I should think it might be very hard for anyone to die with a thing like that on their soul." He led the way to the elevator.

Eva Hardy lay against the pillows like a figure of marble, so white she was. Her lips moved soundlessly, her eyes stared fixedly at the ceiling. Dr. Garvin drew Aileen to the side of the bed.

"Mrs. Hardy," he said, "you have been asking for Miss Copeland. Here she is."

The sick woman turned her head, then as she saw Aileen Copeland she shrank back, a look of fear in her eyes.

"Aileen!" she gasped, and lay silent.

"What do you want with me, Eva?" Aileen asked.

"God—don't you see! I—I think I'm going to die. I can't go, with what I did to you on my conscience." She turned to the nurse, her voice very weak and faint.

"Write down what I am going to say. It must be witnessed. I tricked this woman—so that her husband could divorce her—and marry me. I lied, on the stand. It was I

who unlocked her bedroom door. She was innocent—innocent—oh, God! I'm so weak." She clutched despairingly at her throat. "She must have the divorce set aside—then get another—from him. Promise me—Aileen. He is a brute and I—I hate him—but I deserved—everything—forgive—"

She fell back unconscious.

Dr. Garvin grasped the woman's wrist, gave some hurried instructions to his assistant.

"There's just one chance to save her," he said. "Blood transfusion. At once. Whom can we call on, Eagan?"

"Let me," said Aileen, and began to unbutton the sleeve of her blouse.

A Whisper in the Night

(Continued from page 74)

returned from dumping his load, Breault said:

"You see, we know this Jolly Roger fellow is spending the winter somewhere up here. And Cassidy says there is a girl down south—"

Jolly Roger's face was hidden.

"—who would like to see him," finished Breault.

When McKay turned toward him the Ferret was carelessly lighting his pipe.

"I remember—Cassidy told me about this girl," said Jolly Roger. "He said—some day—he would trap this—this man—through the girl. So if I happen to meet Jolly Roger McKay, and send him back to the girl, it will help out the law. Is that it, Breault? And is there any reward tacked to it? Anything in it for me?"

Breault was looking at him, puffing out tobacco smoke, and with that odd twist of a smile about his thin lips.

"Listen to the storm," he said. "I think it's getting worse—Cummings!"

Suddenly he held out a hand to Peter, who sat near the lamp, his bright eyes fixed watchfully on the stranger.

"Nice dog you have, Cummings. Come here, Peter! Peter—Peter—"

Tight fingers seemed to grip at McKay's throat. He had not spoken Peter's name since the rescue of Breault.

"Peter—Peter—"

The Ferret was smiling affably. But Peter did not move. In that moment McKay wanted to hug him up in his arms.

The Ferret laughed.

"He's a good dog, a very good dog, Cummings. I like a one-man dog, and I also like a one-dog man. That's what Jolly Roger McKay is, if you ever happen to meet him. Travels with one dog. An aire-dale, and his name is Peter. Funny name for a dog, isn't it?"

He faced the outer room, stretching his long arms above his head.

"I'm going to try sleep again, Cummings. Good night! And—Mother of Heaven!—listen to the wind."

"Yes, it's a bad night," said McKay.

He looked at Peter when Breault was gone, and his heart was beating fast. He could hear the wind, too. It was sweeping over the Barren more fiercely than before, and the sound of it brought a steely glitter into his eyes. This time he could not run away from the law. Flight meant death. He was in a trap—a trap built by himself. That is, if Breault had guessed the truth,

and he believed he had. There was only one way out—and that meant fight.

He went into the outer room for his pack and a blanket. He did not look at Breault, but he knew the man's narrow eyes were following him. He left the alcohol lamp burning, but in his own room, after he had spread out his bed, he extinguished the light. Then, very quietly, he dug a hole through the snow partition between the two rooms. With his eye close to the aperture he could see Breault. The Ferret was sitting up, and leaning toward Porter. He reached over, and touched him on the shoulder.

Jolly Roger widened the snow-slit another inch, straining his ears to hear. He could see Tavish and the girl asleep. In another moment Porter was sitting up, with the Ferret's hand gripping his arm warningly. Breault motioned toward the inner room, and Porter was silent. Then Breault bent over and began to whisper. Jolly Roger could see very clearly the change that came into Porter's face. His eyes widened, and he stared toward the inner room, making a movement as if to rouse Tavish.

The Ferret stopped him.

"Don't get excited. Let them sleep."

McKay heard that much—and no more. For some time after that the two men sat close together, conversing in whispers. Jolly Roger watched them until Breault extinguished the second lamp. Then he lightly plugged the hole in the partition with snow, and reached out in the darkness until his hand found Peter.

"They think they've got us, boy," he whispered. "They think they've got us!"

Very quietly they lay for an hour. McKay did not sleep, and Peter was wide awake. At the end of that hour Jolly Roger crept on his hands and knees to the doorway and listened. One after another he picked out the steady breathing of the sleepers. Then he began feeling his way around the wall of his room until he came to a place where the snow was very soft.

"An air-drift," he whispered to Peter, close at his shoulder. "We'll fool 'em, boy. And we'll fight—if we have to."

He began worming his head and shoulders and body into the air-drift like a gimlet. A foot at a time he burrowed himself through, heaving his body up and down and sideways to pack the light snow, leaving a round tunnel two feet in diameter behind him. Within an hour he had come to the outer crust on the windward side of

the big snow dune. He did not break through this crust, which was as tough as crystal glass, but lay quietly for a time and listened to the sweep of the wind outside. Then he returned to his room. The mouth of his tunnel he packed with snow. After that he wound the blanket about him and gave himself up calmly to sleep.

Only Peter lay awake after that. And it was Peter who roused Jolly Roger in what would have been the early dawn outside the snow dune. McKay felt his restless movement and opened his eyes. He could hear movement and low voices. Carefully he dug out once more the little hole in the snow wall, and widened the slit.

Breault and Tavish were asleep, but Porter was sitting up, and close beside him sat the girl. Her coiled hair was loosened, and had fallen over her shoulders. McKay could see her hand clasping Porter's arm. Porter was talking, with his face so close to her bent head that his lips touched her hair, and though Jolly Roger could understand no word that was spoken he knew Porter was whispering the exciting secret of his identity to Josephine Tavish. He could see a shadow of protest in her face. Porter cautioned her with a finger at her lips, then his fingers closed about her uncoiled hair as he drew her to him. McKay watched the long kiss between them. The girl drew away quickly then, and Porter tucked the blanket about her. After that he stretched out again beside Breault.

Jolly Roger guessed what had happened. The girl had awakened, a bit nervous, and had roused Porter and asked him to relight the alcohol lamp. And Porter had told her of the interesting discovery which Breault had made—and kissed her.

Every few minutes he looked through the slit in the snow wall. The last time, half an hour after Porter had returned to his blanket, Josephine Tavish was sitting up. She was very wide awake. McKay watched her as she rose slowly to her knees, and then to her feet. She bent over Porter and Breault to make sure they were asleep, and then came straight toward his room.

He lay back on his blanket, with one hand gripped closely about Peter.

"Be quiet, boy," he whispered.

He could see the shutting out of light at his door as the girl stood there, listening for his breathing. She breathed heavily, and before he closed his eyes he saw Josephine Tavish coming toward him. In a moment she was bending over him. He could feel the soft caress of her loose hair on his face

Cosmopolitan for January, 1922

and hands. Then she knelt quietly down beside him, stroking Peter with her hand, and shook him lightly by the shoulder.

"Jolly Roger!" she whispered.

He looked up at the white face.

"Yes," he replied softly. "What is it, Miss Tavish?"

She bent her face still nearer to him, until her hair cluttered his throat and breast.

"Listen to me. If you are Jolly Roger McKay, you must get away before Breault awakens in the morning. I think the storm is over—there is no wind—and if you are here when day comes—"

Her fingers loosened. Jolly Roger reached out and found her hand: It clasped his own—firm, warm, thrilling.

"I thank you for what you have done," she whispered. "But the law—and Breault—they have no mercy!"

She was gone, swiftly and silently.

In the gloom he drew Peter close to him.

"We're up against it again, Pied-Bot. We've got to take another chance."

He worked without sound, and in a quarter of an hour his pack was ready, and the entrance to his tunnel dug out. He went into the outer room then, where Josephine Tavish was awake. Jolly Roger pantomimed his desire as she sat up. He wanted something from one of the packs. She smiled gently at him, and her lips formed an unvoiced whisper of gratitude as he turned to go. He thought she was beautiful then, with her shining hair and eyes, and her lips parted, and her hands half reaching out to him, as if in that moment of parting she was giving him courage and faith. Suddenly she pressed the palms of her fingers to her mouth and sent the kiss of benediction to him through the twilight glow.

A moment later, crawling through his tunnel with Peter close behind him, there was an exultant singing in Jolly Roger's heart. Again he was fleeing from the law, but always, as Yellow Bird had predicted in her sorcery, there were happiness and hope in his going.

He broke through the dune-crust at the end of his tunnel and crawled out into the thick, gray dawn of a barren-land day. The sky was heavy overhead, and the wind had died out. It was the beginning of the brief lull which came in the second day of the Great Storm.

McKay laughed softly as he sensed the odds against them.

"We'll be having the storm at our heels again before long, Pied-Bot," he said. "We'd better make for the timber a dozen miles south."

He struck out, circling the dune, so that he was traveling straight away from the first hole he had cut through the shell of the drift. From that door, made by the outlaw who had saved them, Josephine Tavish watched the shadowy forms of man and dog until they were lost in the gray-white chaos of a frozen world.

Leading south, ever with the fear of the law in his heart, Jolly Roger flies through the storm until suddenly he comes to a great decision. Even Pied-Bot knew that something tremendous had happened to his master. How Jolly Roger pushes on with a new swing in his stride and a new joy in his heart until he comes to an objective and what happened to him there is told in the next story in this series in the FEBRUARY COSMOPOLITAN.

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NAME

ADDRESS

You Can Never Tell What a Woman Means

(Continued from page 61)

Nature may be repressed, but she cannot be squelched. And—well, 'tis not tinder alone that flames at the lightning's shaft. "I'm hit, too," he might have assured Gas.

They breakfasted, as they had dined, in one end of the great living room. The four of them came to their feet as one as Thummy appeared.

"Good morning!" she announced gaily.

In the shaded chiffon she had been almost beautiful; in the trim breeches and pongee waist she had borrowed from Dot she was utterly adorable. And with all the modesty in the world she suspected it.

Now, as she took her place, she glanced at Gas. He had shaved, and so had the others. She smothered a smile.

"Isn't it a wonderful morning?" she demanded. "I'm going snowshoeing right after breakfast."

"I'm coming along—if I may," proclaimed Gas promptly.

"Oh, you mustn't!" she protested. "I don't want to be a bother or interfere in your plans in any way—"

Gas grinned. "Quit your kidding," he suggested. "The others can do as they please, but I—"

They all pleased to go, apparently—even Holly. They went through the pines, making a snowshoe trail in the glistening whiteness that winter had spread over their little world. And Thummy announced that she loved it!

The air, crisp and keen, was like that which is prohibited. She stooped, with quick grace, gathered a handful of snow and molded it into a squashy ball and threw it at Gas. Her aim was good, but he dodged expertly and—the missile took Holly fairly in the face.

Thummy blushed to her eyes. "I'm sorry!" she apologized.

Holly brushed the snow from his eyes. "It's all right," he assured her very stiffly.

Thummy looked away. "What a prune!" she thought.

And such was the first day. In the evening thereof, she returned to camp after an afternoon spent in taking lessons in skiing from Gas—Gas who was amazed at the progress she made, yet never doubted that he was her first instructor in the art.

Holly again elected to sit in the kitchen and smoke with Bill, rather than join the circle about the fireplace.

Of this she seemed quite oblivious. Yet the departure of Holly the next morning, when he went off with Bill to inspect a bear trap the latter had baited, was duly noted and considered.

"Oh, Holly's a queer duck!" explained Gas, answering a question that was not quite so casual as he thought. "He's always been that way."

"Then," she suggested, "it's not just me?"

"Lord, no!" Gas assured her, "It's all your well known sex."

The days slipped by, with Gas and Thummy now joyously hailing each other by their first names. Gas, indeed, was running strong, with Fat Amos, handicapped by avoirdupois, and Jay Morris, handicapped by a fiancée, nowhere.

In this wise matters stood when in the evening of the fifth day chance—at least Holly believed that was it—threw him and Thummy together tête-à-tête. She, descending to the living room just before dinner, found him there alone in front of the fire.

"Please don't rise," she begged, very sweetly. "I know you hate to."

Nevertheless he rose, with hectic celerity, a slow flush showing under his tan.

"And especially," she went on, seating herself and crossing slim, silk-sheathed ankles, "for me! Do sit down and tell me why you detest me so."

He managed, by the grace of God rather than any control of his body, to sit down, but he could do no more. She gave him a swift glance.

"Don't try to be polite," she urged. "It doesn't seem natural in you. And it will be interesting and perhaps helpful. I know some of my faults, but not all of them."

He cleared his throat. "Er," he managed, with great effort, and stuck.

"To err is human—but not good English!" she remarked. "At least that is what they taught me at boarding school. But there!—I'm being forward. That's one of my faults—isn't it?"

He said nothing, but she apparently construed his silence as assent.

"And of course I'm vain!" she admitted. "I know you think that."

He knew that she was deliberately embarrassing him and the thought helped him. He gathered himself mightily.

"I think you are being unfair—"

"Oh, that," she blithely assured him, "is a woman's birthright! What I want to know is what is wrong with me individually. My big faults—"

"Why not," he interrupted, in a voice that was much calmer than he felt, "tell me mine instead?"

Thummy gave him a swift glance and then smiled sweetly. "I don't know as I dare. Men are really much vainer than women. But if you insist—"

He nodded and braced himself.

"I think," she said deliberately, "that you must be clever. Gas told me about that well you dug when everybody said you couldn't—"

He squirmed uncomfortably, but she appeared not to notice.

"And you aren't!"—she gave him a deliberate, malicious-eyed scrutiny—"you aren't too bad-looking. Especially when you blush—"

Footsteps above suggested an impending interruption. Hastily she added: "In fact, I suspect that you have so many awful virtues and so few redeeming faults that you are absolutely—deadly!"

Whereupon Gas mercifully descended the stairs, two at a lick.

"What ho!" he announced. "The lion and the lamb sit down together—"

"Dinner," Bill broke in prosaically, "is served."

"Attaboy, let's eat," announced Fat Amos from above.

And that was the end of that episode. And yet not the end. Holly went to his room early that night, while Gas still hovered about the fireplace with its more

dangerous flame than that which burned temperately between the andirons.

"Going to bed so soon?" demanded Gas, as Holly passed through. And then, lest by any chance he construe this as an invitation to delay, he added promptly, "Well, nighty night, sweet prince!"

To Holly's surprise Thummy looked up. "Good night," said she, sweetly.

The light from the fire filled the room, playing fanciful tricks with everything it touched. She could not be sure that what she thought she saw in his eyes was there—yet her own widened and a little thrill ran through her.

"Good night," he said, and was gone. Silence fell on the two left by the fire-side—silence, that is, punctuated by Fat Amos's snores.

"I said awful things to him," she announced, suddenly. "Mister Evans I mean. I—hope I didn't hurt his feelings—"

"Whose? Holly's? Small chance. He's got a hide like a rhinoceros."

She smothered a charming yawn and arose. As her eyes met his Gas saw that which dazzled him. If it had not been for Fat Amos asleep in his chair he might have put his fortune to the test then and there. Instead he let her go up the stairs.

Long after she should have been fast asleep she laid there wondering. And when, finally, she cuddled down to her pillow and let it waft her toward dreamland her face wore a soft little smile.

Even then the camp had not wholly quieted down. A crack of light showed under the door of the room which Gas shared with Holly.

"Are you asleep?" Gas was demanding, hopefully.

No answer save stentorian breathing. "I say, are you asleep?" demanded Gas, more loudly.

Thereupon Holly surrendered. "Was-ser-matta?" he demanded, achieving a creditable imitation of the indignation of the just awakened.

"Matter!" groaned Gas. "Holly, I'm darned near desperate—"

"Cheer up," suggested Holly. "Business will pick up sooner or later—"

"Business!" exploded Gas. "You fat-headed goof—who mentioned business? What I want to know is how a fellow can propose to a girl when that swine Amos snores in the cor er. I ask you that. And"—with another moan—"she's leaving tomorrow—"

"Tomorrow?" If Gas had been less absorbed in his own woes he would have noticed that Holly was certainly awake now.

"I saw a telegram from her father," explained Gas. "She goes tomorrow noon. Tomorrow morning is my last chance. Holly, old man, I want you to get Fat Amos and Jay out of the way—"

Holly pulled himself together. "How?" "Push them off a precipice, for all I care. I must be alone with Thummy—and get this suspense over with."

He sank to the edge of his cot as if the suspense were indeed too much.

"You'll see me through?" pleaded Gas. "Yes," said Holly—and turned his face to the wall.

In the night the wind changed. For

days it had come out of the north and west, bitter cold, but quickening the blood. But when they all gathered for breakfast it blew from the south and the frozen eaves were dripping.

"Call this a 'chinook' out west, don't they, Holly?" hazarded Gas. And, having focused the attention of his accomplice, he gave him a look that was meant to add, "Go on now, spring it."

"I guess so," admitted Holly. Then, looking from Amos to Morris, he added, "What do you say we climb Woticnic today?"

"Go to it, you chaps," seconded Gas, cordially. "But count me out. I must have sprained my knee yesterday—"

Thummy, who had seemed engrossed with some inner thought, looked up, her eyes meeting Holly's squarely.

"Can I come?" she asked eagerly. "I adore mountains."

Gas put down his coffee cup and gaped. "But I thought you were leaving this noon," he protested.

"So does father," she agreed. "I have decided otherwise."

"Oh!" observed Gas, momentarily at a loss. Then he brightened. "Well, if you're all going I'm game. I'll trail along—"

"But your knee!" Thummy reminded him. "You mustn't risk—"

"It isn't that bad," Gas answered, quite unabashed.

He realized that she saw through him, yet his spirits rose.

"Do you think I've got a chance, Holly?" he pleaded, impulsively, as they prepared for the trip.

"She certainly seemed solicitous of your knee."

"The little devil!" murmured Gas feelingly. "Well—let's go! And don't forget you're to lure Amos and Jay off. Or just keep 'em moving, while I sort of hang back and nurse my knee—with Thummy!"

In which he reckoned without Thummy. As a mountain climber she displayed the speed and stamina of a polo pony. They went up Woticnic Indian file, Holly leading, with Thummy, Jay and Gas right behind him, while somewhere in the rear, swearing soulfully, lumbered Fat Amos.

They paused for breath.

"Why," Gas suggested hopefully to Holly and Jay, "don't you two go along up? Thummy and I'll wait here while I rest my knee—"

But Thummy spoiled that, too.

"I want to be the first to the top," she protested. Then her eyes challenging Holly, she added with curious breathlessness, "I'll race you!"

"This is no place for fast going," warned Holly quickly. "The rocks—"

But she was off, swift and sure-footed and boyishly active in her trim breeches. One moment Thummy, speeding across sheer stretches of wind-swept ice with a reckless abandon that made Holly grit his teeth as he pursued her, was but a dozen paces ahead; the next she had dodged around the corner of a great boulder and was—nowhere! Nowhere, that is, save perhaps—

This possibility, however, Holly could not even contemplate. He stood with his heart in his throat, looking in every direction except ahead, where a cleft in

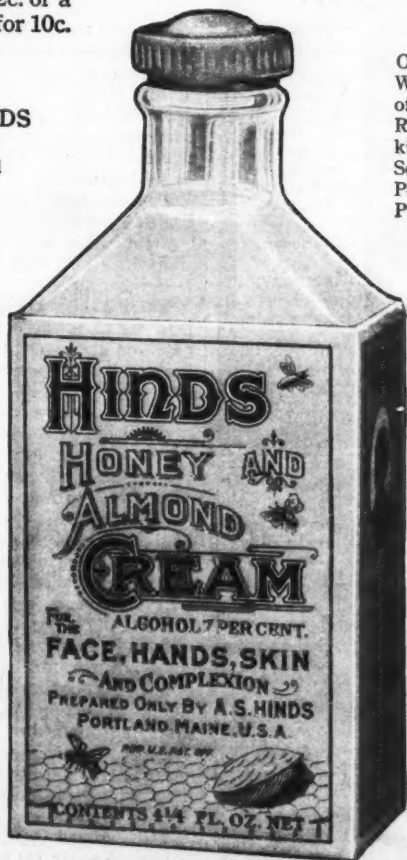
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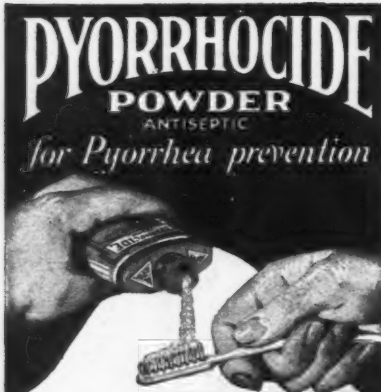


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USEC WHILE YOU SLEEP

Woticnic's shoulder had placed a precipice edge.

"She must be right around here," he assured himself, feverishly. "Perhaps she's just hiding—"

He filled his lungs, with swift intake and let them out.

"Thummy! Oh, Thum-my!"

Ears strained, every muscle quivering, he waited for a reply.

"B-boo!"

It seemed to come from right at his feet.

"D-did you j-jump by any chance?" the voice questioned.

"Where are you?" he demanded, breathlessly.

"Look over the edge and you'll s-see me," she directed. And added, "I'll b-bet you *did* jump. Some men do if a girl even says 'B-boo' to them."

This he ignored. Flattening himself out on his stomach he peered over the edge. She was on a little ledge, six feet below. And below that—

"Please!" she observed, "D-don't ask me to admire the view. I can't b-bear to look that way—"

"Don't!" he advised quickly. "Can you stand up?"

"My knees are sort of wobbly—but I'll try."

"Don't look down—look up at me. Now come to your feet. Steady. Don't take your eyes from mine."

She didn't. They dilated a little and her lips parted.

"Hold up your hands," he commanded.

"I want to take your wrists."

She gave him childlike obedience.

"Steady now. Everything's all right."

He braced himself and slowly, with breathless care and the use of every ounce of his strength, he managed to draw her up. As, still using infinite caution, he came to his feet and stood her on hers, he saw her tremble. "You're all right now," he said unsteadily.

The admirable hold she had kept upon herself slipped abruptly.

"Oh," she wailed, "it was awful! I slipped. And I shut my eyes and thought I—I was gone."

Blindly she reached for him. And if he held her close there was need for it. But only for an instant, for self-control came back to her as suddenly as she had lost it. She slipped from the shelter of his arm and tried to look unconscious of ever having been within it.

"I never thought I'd be such a silly," she commented, her color very high and her eyes evading his. "We don't do such things in the army. And"—she thrust feminine hands to her head—"my hair is coming down."

As she took off her little red tam her hair floated free. She gave it a little shake and began coiling it.

"As—as a woman hater," she remarked, looking up at him with a little tremulous smile, "you ought to say something cutting about a woman just saved from death worrying about her appearance—"

In every man there is a breaking point, no matter what his self-restraint may be. Holly reached his breaking point then.

"I suppose," he said savagely, "that if I should tell you that so far from being a woman hater I'd be just fool enough to fling myself over that precipice to give you happiness, you'd be surprised."

It was he, however, who was to be surprised. She was silent for a second and then she looked up at him, her cheeks vivid, her eyes mysterious.

"Please—don't!" she breathed. "Or I'll—come, too!"

The truth must out. He did not, as he should, crush her to him masterfully. He simply stood and stared his utter incomprehension.

"I'm being forward, you see," she went on, suddenly shy herself now. "And unfair—taking advantage of you when you can't run. But—oh, please don't look at me that way—"

Thereupon a great light—the light that never was on land or sea—broke upon him and blessed him.

"You darling!" he murmured—her ear was not so very far from his lips—"I feel as if I were dreaming."

They had forgotten the others but the others had not forgotten them. Gas found them at that instant and stopped short in his tracks, the hail he was about to give dying on his lips. He had not the wit even to withdraw; he simply stood there and stared his utter incredulity. And Thummy, looking up, saw him and had the grace to blush.

"Oh!" she gasped. "It's—all right. We're—engaged."

"Break the news to mother," Gas murmured feebly. "I don't know just what's hit me, or where, but—"

In time—a great deal of time—what he himself referred to as the poor old bean sopped up a general idea of what had happened.

"I forgive you, Holly," he acquiesced, mournfully. "But I don't see yet how you managed it—"

"Easy!" retorted Holly who, though physically he had descended from Woticnic and was now in their room, was emotionally still sitting on the top of the world. "All you have to do is to say hateful things and pretend to be a cynic and stand offish until they feel like slapping you—"

"Did she tell you that?" demanded Gas, incredulously. Then, when Holly affirmed it with a nod, a ghost of his usual grin appeared.

"Indirect advertising—what?" he commented. He shook his head wonderingly. "Great stuff—but hard to handle. With all due respect to you, Holly, I still don't see how you managed it. *That* gets me."

"That gets me too!" admitted Holly, with sudden humility. And then, having been separated from Thummy for all of fifteen minutes, he went downstairs hoping to find her in the living room. And there she was—Thummy looking even more adorable, more utterly desirable than ever, though she had not yet changed.

"I've been writing a telegram to father," she told him. "Read it."

He took it from her, managing at the same time to squeeze her hand.

Private Baird, he read, recently A. W. O. L., starts for Leavenworth tomorrow prepared to face court martial. Prisoner she has captured follows shortly, bearing valuable information.

He looked up at her. "I hope he'll think well of it—"

"Leave *that* to me," she suggested.

There was nothing in this world he would not have left to her just then.

The Old 'Un

(Continued from page 26)

here. I say, let's try. If us drowns, us drowns. If us don't, mayhap us saves 'em. Us can at least die like men from Brixham town!"

Suddenly, as if hesitation were over with, knowing that the odds were hopelessly against their own survival, they belowered their assent, their defiance of fate.

Captain Tom, with white beard twisted and tossed by the overlapping winds, gave a quiet order to the helmsman. "Bring down past 'em, close enough so they can hear me. Then us'll tack and fetch back on the wind'ard reach."

He still clung there in the shrouds as the *Seagull* swept down upon the wreck to within sixty or eighty yards, and then as if frightened by the reefs sheered off toward the open sea; but as they went past, his voice, sea-trained, roared through the megaphone: "We're going to try to run down on ye. Stand by the stern to jump. It's the only chance!"

Even the men of the wrecked *Quickstep*, in their terrible extremity, found time to gasp and look amazed at his daring. It was recklessness superb, foolhardiness in the extreme.

The *Seagull* flew out seaward, headed up the channel on an inward tack, came about and shortened some of her sail.

"Us must carry just enough to make sure of clearing well and keeping good steerage way," Captain Tom insisted. "But steerage way us must have."

The *Seagull* slid past a wreck, narrowly missed a second, and a third, and her men looked grave. The sea seemed littered with disaster, as if to forewarn them of their own great risk. Captain Tom climbed down from the shrouds and called to the mate: "Come you with me to the helm. She'll need handling, Bill, up for'ard with 'ee, and—here! Take this megaphone."

"Aye!" was all the ancient said as he took his place. The wind whisked his sou'wester from his head, and his white hair and beard blew wildly.

The terrific smash of the breakers upon the reefs, the resounding roar of great waves beaten to spray on the foot of the cliffs, the angry hissing of sea bellowed and ripped round them in a pandemonium of sound. Nearer they came, nearer, never faltering, and despite their shortened sail running like a maddened horse blind to the menace of destruction. The agnostic's lips moved as if in prayer. The cabin boy, wide-eyed, bareheaded, white-faced, clung convulsively to a combing. The fourth hand who bent over the weather rail tensed and in readiness to fling himself forward to assist anyone coming within reach muttered over and over again, "My God! God! My God!" as if to relieve himself of the strain. Death was within a few yards now. They were tensed to the point of breaking, and Captain Tom, as if reading their minds, jerked them back to their senses with a great shout, "Steady! Steady, lads! Now! Now she takes it!"

Instantly as if unleashed from a spell of silence, there was a confused bellow of shouts, oaths, prayers, exclamations and meaningless cries. The hands of Captain Tom and his mate tightened heavily, their arms fixed themselves like rigid bars, their

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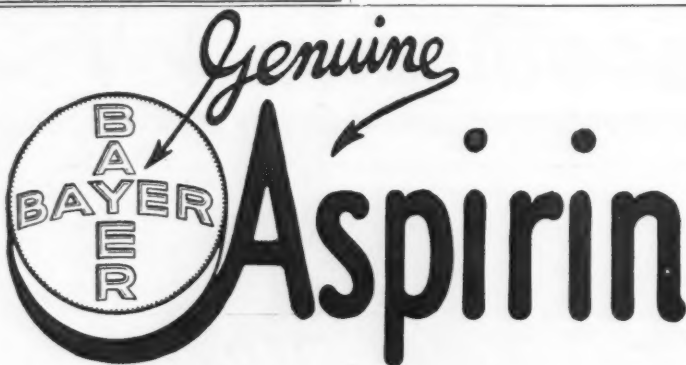
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feet in the clumsy seaboots seemed to take fresh grips upon the deck, and the *Seagull* shot down past the stern of the breaking *Quickstep*. A boy was thrown bodily across the gap to fall on her decks wildly embracing her capstan. Another figure sprang into the air to fall face downward and with outflung arms go sliding across the wet planks. Two more followed who landed well, a fifth, the Admiral of the fleet, the last to jump, failed to clear the rail, but caught it with one desperate arm, and was seized and jerked bodily aboard.

And all this time neither Captain Tom nor his mate ever relaxed. Intent and absorbed in their terrifying task, they might have been unfeeling automatons, indifferent to the efforts of those they had come to save. They threw the helm over, stood tensed when the *Seagull* missed the outer end of a reef by feet, rather than yards, held their breaths in suspense in that moment when fate was to decide whether she could clear or must rip herself to pieces on the black tusks beneath, then, as if herself terrified by the dangers through which she had passed, bent far over and fled swiftly toward the open sea.

But "The Grouch," bent forward with both gnarled hands raised in mid air and the megaphone rolling to and fro about his feet, saw the wreck of the *Quickstep* disappear beneath the waves almost immediately after the Admiral's crew had been rescued. His vocabulary was again lean and paucid and he fell to screaming: "Lord! Good Lord! Five minutes more an' they'd a been gone. Five minutes! Only five minutes!"

III

WHEN the *Seagull*, still flying as if frightened, sped out into the blackness of the southwest, her last view was that of scattered ships, some of which were frantically repairing damages, others of which stood by, and still others that fought bravely outward with broken masts and torn sails.

"There be enough there, so us can do no more. They need no help from us," said Captain Tom, as he turned the helm over to another man.

He walked over to where the Admiral and two others were binding up the injuries of the man who had slid across and battered head and hands against the lee bulwarks. The Admiral, young, stalwart, frank, got from his knees to his feet and stared at Captain Tom. He put out his hand which Captain Tom accepted, stood there for a long moment, gulped as if some emotion had rushed upward to throttle him and then could say no more than: "Aye, Skipper Tom! By God! Thou art a man. A sailorman! A fisherman! And I bea'n't fit to hold thy hand!"

"Humph!" said Captain Tom. "It's nought!" And then made a vast pretense of being occupied in looking after his ship.

The Admiral sought the loneliest part of the ship, and sat, hour after hour, with his head bent forward and resting in his hands, as if perpetually considering, reviewing, and thinking of those scores of men who slept on the sea floors off the coast of France. He could not find pardon from the fact that they had expected him to take chances, and that he had accepted

them. He sometimes thought he could hear the shouts of drowning men as they were tossed, thrown and wafted by cruel waves, until the despairing cries were silenced by the ultimate and muting hand of death.

The wind was warm and constant, but the skies overcast, as if in mourning, when the *Seagull*, the first of what was left of the Brixham fleet, two hundred sails and more, swung round Thatcher rock and headed across Torre Bay. She seemed to creep inward with reluctance as if considering those to whom she must bear sad news.

Futile! Futile all! From the wires had come the tale of tempest, of wreck, and wholesale death, and the certainty that of the thousand and more men who had sailed forth many were those who could never return. The *Seagull* slipped, sea-silvered, battered, infinitely fatigued, to her moorings in the outer harbor. Her "scruffer" came out in his boat. Captain Tom looked around for the Admiral, slipped to the companionway, shouted once, and then, getting no response, heavily descended the steep steps.

In the tiny cabin aft sat a man with head bowed over arms. Captain Tom hesitated, then went forward and put a hand on the bent shoulders. He hesitated again, seeking words, for his was no free and facile tongue.

"Bob," he said, "Bob, mebbe it's best I go ashore first, after all. I came down to get 'ee, but—but—yes, I think I'll go first and alone. It's hard luck, but don't 'ee mind. It weren't your fault."

Then he climbed heavily up the steep steps, walked heavily to the side, threw a seaboot over the rail, rested on the strake, stepped downward with trained but unconscious poise into the bobbing boat and said: "Ashore. They others'll come later." The scruffer bent to the oars.

The boat crept toward the opening that would disclose the inner harbor. It brought to view the broad-flung roofs of the deserted fish market, and the worn old quay; but the quay was not deserted. For as if the news of the first arrival from the seas of tragedy had spread, the pave was crowded with anxious or weeping women, and with children who clung to skirts or hands. Men too old for service, bent, gnarled, decrepit, stood amongst them striving to comfort to the bitter end.

A peculiar silence brooded over all when the scruffer's boat with the white-headed old skipper came jerkily to the worn steps of the boat landing. To him it was as if their yearning eyes appealed for solace. He could not meet them. He looked away over the harbor sides, up at the skies, and down at the water. His seaboots seemed to hammer inordinately loud upon the beaten stone as he slowly ascended and the iron-shod heels awoke echoes, as if in that perturbed suspense all sounds were magnified.

He gained the top. He halted, sadly facing those in wait. Twice he tried to speak; but the voice that for more than fifty years had bellowed audibly above the roar of surging seas refused service. Suddenly and despairingly he lifted both hands high on outflung arms, tried again, and cried: "I can't help ye. I can't. God knows I wish I could tell who's gone and who's saved! Name they that will come back, and they who never can, but—but I can't!"

"Aye! An' the word do come that they were caught by they starm with all they trawls out to drag 'em to beam ends, an' to wreck, an' to death, and so it must be that it was the new A'miral who was—"

The profound pity and compassion in the tired old eyes gave way to a sterner look as Captain Tom turned to regard the gnarled old man who had shouted that unfinished accusation.

"It weren't the A'miral's fault! He did the same as may hap I'd of done had I been A'miral myself, and ordered 'em to shoot their trawls. He ain't to blame. He did his best. It was the sea, the storm, the tempest, that none can see or foretell, that murdered them all. If the A'miral himself or anyone else tells you different, don't believe it."

He glared almost sternly at those about him, and then:

"Listen! Hark 'ee all!" he exclaimed, hoarsely, as if distress had robbed him of vigor, "Us all be of Brixham Town. Us know—because us must—*must*, I say!—that sooner or later, it—the sea—must claim its men. And the women of they men ashore must be brave because us of Brixham have nothing else to live for and by, but the sea and God! So us mustn't question when they two call. God and the sea!"

A haggard woman's hand timidly but insistently tugged at the skirts of his sea-sun-, and storm-faded coat, hoping to wrest from him words of hope. He tried to free himself, twitching impatiently. The distressed hands multiplied, until in something akin to a pitying desperation he exerted his strength, tore loose and, forcing his way through the crowd, elbowing right and left, thrusting his great chest outward like the brow of a battleship bursting through waves, he gained the edge of that shore of sorrow. He felt his rudeness. It hurt, for his heart grieved with the burden of memories, and knowledge of what many of them must endure. He wished to God that he might take them all into his arms, and that they might be big enough and strong enough to console them all. And then appreciating the utter futility of his wish, he fled through a narrow climbing street until, breathless and spent, he gained a high point, leant across a wall and stared downward.

Everything was visible; the borders of the blue, unbroken and immutable sea; the fleckless blue of the skies; the blueness of glamorous and infinite space. It brought peace in measure to his soul. There must be something behind all that, some recompense for weariness, for steadfastness and sustained toil. This couldn't be the end. He felt uplifted as if by confirmed conclusion after long doubts, and then leaning against the stone wall, tired and old, and thinking of those on the pier, widows and orphans now, who had clung, yearned, and besought him for news, those from whom he had fled, he abruptly brought both clenched fists down upon the top stones and muttered despairingly, "I ran away! I held back the truth that I could have told so many of 'em because I didn't have guts enough to tell 'em—didn't have the courage to deliver the blow that would end their hopes. I couldn't! I wasn't brave enough. Lord help me! For I've proved a coward—after all!"



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The Hootch Runners

(Continued from page 35)

"I don't know, sir. Only no one made a move in our department."

"Well, Washington will have to find out what was the matter," said the "sick" man, who, by now, was sitting on the side of his bed, showing all signs of health. "I've got the thing started. I'll have to leave town tonight for the West."

"Go ahead, sir," said the officer. "But see if you can't get us some more men here. Do you know who helped me pull these raids today? Three police reporters. They were all the help I could find."

"I'll tell Washington all about it," said the big man. "Keep me out of the case, give your own evidence and do your best."

The officer left the room.

"There you are," said the headquarters man to me. "A citizen of this town complained to the police, to the sheriff and to the local Federal enforcement officer about this place, and finally he wrote to Washington. That's why I came down here. I think the local enforcement officer is done for; we've got proof that he knew about this place. A lot of 'em don't stay honest," he said. "And that's why you fellows are getting all you want to drink." That evening the Washington man was off for another wet spot; by remaining in his room he had kept his identity secret from local bootleggers, local criminals—and local police; thus he can go back again to that town to "work."

This story, like others which follow, is just a picture of what is going on in every corner of the United States these days. It is a story that goes to show that Prohibition has never yet had a real chance in these United States; the same politics, with its graft and pull, that used to control the saloon is controlling our new method of alcohol distribution—bootlegging and whisky-making.

Buffalo was a wet spot a year ago. It was a secret then, but it isn't now: there were only three Prohibition enforcement officers in Buffalo a year ago. There was a contest between Niagara Falls and Canadian bootleggers to see which could dump the most liquid into the United States. What could three men do? The border at Buffalo was as wide open and unobstructed as the Niagara River.

There came to Buffalo one day a big, German-looking fellow who was all-fired set on buying a restaurant. He wanted the liveliest restaurant in town. A real estate man, who was given a glimpse at a \$35,000 roll of bills which the German-looking fellow drew from an inner vest pocket, started a deal. A restaurant-keeper who had a big booze and cabaret trade, wanted to sell for cash. He introduced the new-comer to the restaurant keeper.

"Well, I'll look your place over for a couple of evenings," said the prospective buyer. At last, after several days, he said to the owner, "This looks pretty good to me. I'll buy it. But first I want you to give my bartender and my dining room steward a lot of tips. I'll ask them to come from New York."

For four days the prospective buyer, the bartender and the head waiter watched that restaurant from the very inside. They took an inventory of all the liquor

in the place. Whisky salesmen came to the new-comer and solicited his trade; they gave him prices; they promised to deliver to him every form of liquor known to human beings. "The river is wide open," they said.

Two days before the first payment was to be made on the restaurant the place was raided.

"My God!" said the owner to the prospective buyer, "I suppose you won't buy now, after this raid."

"I'm afraid not," said the big man. "Looks to me as if this town was going dry."

There was a great clean-up in Buffalo. One hundred and forty persons were arrested. The German-looking fellow had been a crack field man from Washington headquarters. It looked, for a while, as if Buffalo were going dry. Washington took a new try at it. Eighteen new enforcement officers were put on the job watching the river, instead of three. The eighteen were all political appointees; they got their jobs by pulls. Fifty per cent of them were later indicted for graft. And Buffalo is still wet today.

Mighty hard luck which overtook a double caravan of whisky one night last winter, near Meadville, Pennsylvania, disclosed the secret of how some other thousands of Americans were getting their drinks without, of course, knowing the actual source.

Two men, one with \$11,000 in cash in his pockets, the other with \$42,000 in bills, each in a separate automobile, escorted four auto trucks out of the town of Meadville, Pennsylvania. Each of the men owned two truck loads of barreled, one-hundred per cent whisky, good enough for a sick king. If a policeman or a sheriff had stopped the caravan, the drivers of the auto trucks would have shown permits for removing whisky to Boston and New York. The owners in the automobiles would have shown copies of permits for removing the whisky from the Meadville warehouse. The sheriff or the policeman would have been forced to permit the cavalcade to proceed.

But it was an unlucky night for bootleggers. Both pairs of trucks and both owner-occupied automobiles were moving smoothly along the narrow road, when the leading truck of the rear pair broke down. Its body bolts had been sheared probably by the surge of the whisky in the forty barrels. The springs of the truck shifted over onto the rear wheels—and stopped them.

"Go ahead," the man who owned the rear set of trucks said to his fellow owner. "Hurry on to the next town. Hire a truck to help me out."

Whereupon the first set of trucks were thrown into high—and within five minutes the front one of them ran into a ditch and blocked the road.

And half an hour later, as luck or tips or some other mysterious influence of secret service would have it, half a dozen federal secret service men with guns drove up.

"Show us your permits," they ordered. With assurance the four truck drivers showed their "road papers."

The two men in the automobiles showed copies of their withdrawal permits.

"Those permits are forged," said a secret service man.

And shortly after this bald statement was made, all on a guess, the secret service man told me, the \$11,000 roll and the \$42,000 roll came to light. The whisky on those four trucks was worth three times as much as the graft money that was offered.

It developed that this great quantity of whisky would have been sold to retail bootleggers in a nearby town and that their speeding runabouts would have distributed it to private consumers over some 700 square miles of territory in the inland. And almost as soon as these two men were arrested prominent politicians came to their aid, asked that they be released and that their whisky and permits—which proved to be forged—be returned to them. Their regular trips with those four trucks from various bonded warehouses were proving a gold mine to more men than themselves.

It was this incident of the two broken down trucks as well as the discovery of a forged permit system that finally resulted in the withdrawal of nearly all whisky permits in that state and the issuance of new ones. The investigations showed that politicians in many parts of the country had backed men of unenviable reputation in securing bona fide withdrawal permits; but the whisky taken out on these permits was not used for manufacturing purposes or for medical purposes but was sold to whoever would buy it at extortionate rates.

Beyond a doubt politicians of both or all parties, depending upon local conditions, often have their hands in the liquor business, just as they did in the old saloon days. It is just as easy for a politician to protect a bootlegger as it used to be to protect a law-breaking, wine room, brothel-keeping saloonkeeper.

Until we can get politics and booze separated in the United States the Prohibition laws cannot ever be given a fair test, much less be a success.

When "Pussyfoot" Johnson tells Europe that America is "drying up," he speaks truly, but in this underworld are literally tens of thousands of men who are "filling in" for the old "liquor traffic" that we have destroyed. It is not one-twentieth the size of our old liquor traffic; it would have to be multiplied by one hundred in effectiveness, wealth and range to supply us with the \$2,500,000,000 worth of alcohol which the old liquor traffic used to bring to our neighborhoods.

This underworld which has taken the place of our liquor traffic is a vicious realm where human life is held cheaply. It has a language all its own with a slang that it alone knows. You, Mr. Bill H. Broadway, do you know what a "stache" is? or a "filler?" or a "grease line?" You bet you don't—they come from the new underground world of the bootlegger. You'll be dropping them glibly a year from now, not knowing the origin. One word has already found its way to you—"grand." It means "a thousand dollars." "Two grand" means "two thousand dollars." It's a word that comes from a corner of the underworld where they really have \$1,000 bills—so many of them, indeed, that they found a slang word to describe them. In the old days, before this rich bootleggers' underworld existed, it was a smart and snapping



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thing to deride a \$100 bill by calling it a "century." But this new bootleggers' underworld, in color, in adventure, in romance, in bravery, in stolidness and in crime, is as "one grand" to "one century" compared with the sordid, ungilded and indoor underworld of the days before Prohibition.

The bootleggers I have talked with—and they have been many—all enjoy their work, as well as their reward. They have regular runs which they cover like railroad engineers. There are thousands of farm watch dogs in every part of the country that bay the nightly passing of the liquor truck or the flash of the fancy runabout that comes on scheduled running time along its accustomed route.

There are various kinds of runners. The truck driver who brings his boss's load safely to its destination is good for \$1.50 a mile. If his trip is a "one-stager," as the bootleggers call it—that is, short enough to require no stop for sleep, his wages will be less than if he has a long route with stop-overs. The long route must be "greased," that is, private citizens or city or county or federal officials must be fixed, so that they will not only permit the passage of the automobile or truck but will guarantee to guard it in a garage or elsewhere while the driver has his sleep. This "greasing" is an expensive proposition. It explains why drinkers in the inland cities must pay \$20 a quart for whisky that sells for six or seven near the seaboard. The longest known whisky runner's route that I have discovered—and if I am wrong I hope I will be corrected by some whisky runner—is from Pittsburgh to Kansas City. There are three "sleeps," or "staches" on this route, where the runner pays \$50 per stop. Therefore the six-dollar-a-quart whisky from Pittsburgh costs the Kansas City man twenty dollars. Your bootlegger with the short run expects 25 per cent profit, after he has laid aside 10 per cent on each deal for "protection money," that is, money which he can use if he is arrested. The runner with the long run plans to make at least 150 per cent, in addition to a percentage for his "sinking funds."

And the average "bootlegger" needs sinking funds. His job of getting drinks to us isn't an easy one. If a big part of his money doesn't go to a lawyer, when "he takes his tumble," or to a "filler" who will take his place in court and perhaps serve 90 days for him, a good part of it must go for protection.

I have in mind a runner on a smoothly-paved, well-paying route of 300 miles between Savannah and Atlanta, Georgia. This young man earned four Cadillacs and a \$12,000 bank account in nine months. His younger brother was helping him—they came of a well to do, middle class family in Atlanta—but the younger brother "took a tumble" one night; he risked a detour from the "greased line." He went to jail for ninety days. Full of remorse, the elder brother quit the business. When I talked with him in Atlanta recently, he was waiting for his brother's term to expire. He had lost his cars and most of his money.

"Poor little fellow!" he said. "He's only nineteen. But the money was so easy! And I never thought we'd get caught! He's so ashamed of having to go to jail that I'm going to take charge

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of him when he gets out, and I'm going to spend the whole rest of my life keeping him straight and helping him."

One of my deepest views into bootleggerdom came from this young man.

"That's a great run from Savannah to Atlanta," he said. "The wholesalers load it for you in a garage in Savannah. All you have to do is to jump into your car and roll off. Booze is so plentiful in Savannah that the wholesalers look for your business. As soon as you get in town they know it and they hunt you up. You can always trust them to give you the real thing. There aren't any 'compromisers' among them."

"What is a 'compromiser'?" I asked.

"Why, he's a fellow who gets booze where and when he can. He doesn't have any regular connections. He'd sell colored water to a customer as quick as not. You take a 'compromiser' and he doesn't know whether his booze is poison or not. He's a one-time man. All he thinks about is getting the money for one deal. They're pirates, too, these 'compromisers.' Any time you hear about a 'compromiser' you're hearing about a bad man. And nearly every time he's a dope fiend, slick and wicked. I can take you 'round the corner here"—we were talking at the Piedmont Hotel—"and show you a bunch of runners, and you'll be able to pick out the 'compromisers' they all look tough. They don't own their own cars or nothing."

Out around the corner we went at my quick suggestion. "Around the corner" is right in the heart of Atlanta. There were at least twenty automobiles of various sorts all drawn up along the curb.

One of the cars was a fivver. On its rear had been built a homemade closet. There was a padlock on its double doors. The whole was painted a dull, funereal and utterly ungleaming black, and on the sides of the closet were the words, neatly done in gilt, "Baptist Annual Consistory."

"That isn't a bootlegger's car, is it?" I asked.

My young friend laughed uproariously. "Sure! Why not?" he said. "That young fellow over there in the straw hat rigged up that car. He found those words in a book somewhere. All the country people along his route think he's a tract distributor. And he can talk religion pretty good, too." The incident reminded me of the bootlegger in Florida who, because of the plentitude of "tin Lizzie" missionaries and street speakers in that district during the winter time, painted on the sides of his car, in large red letters, "Jesus Loves You."

Galveston, Mobile and New Orleans are the centers of bootleggers' routes into the interior. But many of the roads are pretty bad in this part of the country, and the home-rigged still, with its ardent product, "moonshine," finds more users in this part of the United States than anywhere else except in the mountains, where "moonshine" has always been made and preferred to "fancy, red, grocery-store likker."

There is a stately sadness in the apparent dryness of New Orleans. Obviously the famous old places were decent places, too. You cannot get a drink at any of them. At old Antoine's in St. Louis Street where, in the old days, the gentle folks of New Orleans used to betake themselves for

suppers after the opera, the cellars have been sold. Who would "wink," in Antoine's, at those stately old French waiters?

But when I was in New Orleans last autumn you never knew at a soft drink bar or even at a drug store soda fountain, whether the beer you asked for would be one per cent or one thousand. The breweries had cut loose sometime before and sent out a flood of real beer. And in all of the out of the way corners of the city bars were in operation.

But farther west, to the Rio Grande, we begin to see again the real romance of bootlegging, the adventure of smuggling.

Time was, not more than a year ago, when booze smuggled from Mexico was considered deadly. Counterfeit government bond stamps, which were made by the millions in the United States—producing an unprecedented activity in the office of W. H. Moran, head of the United States Treasury secret service—found their way to Mexico, and were used on bottles of poisonous liquor.

"This ain't Mexican liquor," said a bellboy who bought me a quart of good bottled-in-bond whisky in a Texas hotel. "Them Mexicans would shoot you fer two bits, and they'd pizen you with likker sooner'n not. This didn't come from across the river."

But Mexican border stuff is improving these days. And it wasn't the Mexicans who improved it. It was the hardy American pioneer bootlegger who went over into Mexico at Piedras Negras, Juarez and Tia Juana, and had real imported whisky shipped to him by rail down from Mexico City. Every hour of the day is wild in these three Mexican towns. Juarez seems to be all bars. These are named for various states or cities, and sometimes for brands of American whiskies. Passports are required for entrance into Mexico, but at this writing these were easy to get.

If you want any whisky delivered over "on the other side," you will have no difficulty. The American pioneer has taken an American bartender over the Rio Grande with him, and this bartender will understand your wishes immediately.

But this is not to say that the Rio Grande is unguarded. The Texas Rangers are relentless hunters. I have not heard that one of them has ever been charged with crookedness. They have been killed, but not corrupted. Ask any of the Mexican smugglers in the Big Bend country if they think either Captain Will Wright of the Rangers or Captain Charles Stevens, of the Border Patrol, is crooked. Wright has a squad that works night and day in the search for smugglers. With work like Wright's to do there's more fun in being straight than in going wrong. Wright's troop and the other troops of Rangers along the 1,420 miles of Texas-Mexico border, are not particularly on the look-out for the small smuggler, or the "half-pinter" as the border folks call him. There has recently developed a wholesale business across the Mexican-Texas border. The liquor wholesaler in Mexico, usually an American, will take an order for a fairly large quantity of liquor, delivered F. O. B. on the American side.

And if you don't believe that the Ranger is really working, look at these prices—prices always tell the story of official honesty or dishonesty:

A bottle of tequila, a popular Mexican drink along the border, sells in Mexico for one dollar. Across the river the American bootlegger pays the smuggler five dollars for it. The ultimate consumer pays twelve dollars a bottle. Good whisky, smuggled into El Paso, costs, at this writing, about fifteen dollars a quart, or five times what it costs across the river.

The wholesale smugglers lay their routes out in the sage brush country and down the steep banks of the Rio Grande. Horses or mules carry the load. Guns are ready. Bootlegging here is a life-and-death business. If the smugglers come into contact with the Rangers, there is sure to be shooting. Five of the official border guards were killed in the first six months of 1921 and twenty-five were wounded.

And so the Texan bootlegger, brother of the fast-speeding, "greased route" runner of the effete East, lumbers his dusty way along the dimly-outlined road through the sage brush and takes his chances. It's slow and heavy and dangerous business, this Mexican smuggling, and liquor comes high in Texas; the folks that get it have got to want it pretty badly.

Of late some whisky has been passing through the sky. The oil men of Northern Texas are willing and able to pay well for their whisky; and aeroplanes capable of carrying from three to six cases of whisky have occasionally brought good cheer to the thirsty oil kings of Texas and Oklahoma.

On the Pacific Coast whisky drinking is more dangerous, perhaps, than in any part of the country. A certain alleged Irish whisky, which bootleggers claim is brought up the Coast from South America, has been proven a rank Mexican poison. The "compromisers" in California cities, when they cannot secure real whisky for their customers, often fall back on this "Irish whisky," with terrible results. As I have related in a previous article, the Elks, who held their convention in Los Angeles in 1921, were warned by their fellows not to buy the bootlegger's liquor but to use prescriptions at drug stores. San Diego, which is near Tia Juana, has many stories to tell of the death or ruin of more than one of its prominent citizens through the deadly Mexican counterfeit.

In many parts of the country automobile whisky running is coming to be a precarious business. The railroads are carrying whisky in many parts of the United States; it is safe to say that the higher officials know nothing about it.

"I want \$80,000 worth of whisky," said a wholesale bootlegger in a southern port recently, "and I want it in a hurry." His speech was addressed to whisky "importers."

"All right," said the chief importer of the group. "You go over to So-and-so's office and tell him you want to buy 120 cases of pineapples. He'll have 'em down at the railroad station and we'll line the car with 'em and fix in the whisky. He'll consign the car of fruit to some fruit man in your neighborhood and fix it up with him. He'll sell you a hundred and twenty cases of oranges instead of pineapples, if you'd rather have 'em, but he tells us it'll be easier for you to get rid of the pineapples and you'll make more money on 'em."

The big bootlegger bought the pine-



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apples and they were sent down to the station. But the ship that should have brought the whisky from the Bahamas was signaled away from land by bootleggers who saw a United States marshal snooping around the point where the load was to be put ashore. The deal fell through and the fruit dealer took back the pineapples.

You have only to talk to a bootlegger for a few minutes to get his opinion of the perfidy of the railroads in hauling liquor.

There is one well-known whisky runner in Florida who by some means got hold of an automobile oil tank, such as is used by the big oil companies. He had a hatchway cut out of the top of the tank and he upholstered the inside with stuffed burlap. In this tank he could carry \$60,000 worth of whisky, in bottles, when they were properly packed. There wasn't a more gaudily painted, land-going oil tanker in the United States than his. He devised the name of a fictitious oil company and had it painted in brilliant letters on the sides of his craft. He "greased" himself a route along the lower Atlantic Coast, and became famous among bootleggers, North and South, for the size of his earnings. He's still running at this writing. But he used to sell his whisky at Savannah for \$80 a case, and since the railroads and boats have been carrying whisky the price has fallen to \$45, and even \$40, at his market port.

How much the railroads are being used by wholesale bootleggers is difficult to ascertain. Railroad yardmen are as human as policemen, or government officials, or men of any other calling that have been corrupted in the bootlegging business. Railroad yardmen, working in collusion at both ends of the line, are using the railroads pretty effectively in carrying part-carload lots of alcohol.

"I lost \$800 on one runabout load of liquor," a lively young bootlegger said to me in wet St. Louis the other day. "Somebody got a freight car load of whisky into our town and the price dropped 25 per cent. They arrested one yard master who set the car out on a siding where a motor truck could get to it, but that didn't get me back my money. The railroads ought to stay out of this business. Some of us bootleggers will be squealing on one of them sometime."

And so some of us in the United States are getting our drinks by hook or by crook. But of thirty cities and towns which I have visited so far in my investigation of the Prohibition question I have not found one in which local politicians were not, in some way, either shielding or winking at the bootleggers' traffic. I have not found one single city in which the city police, the county officials, the state officials and the federal officials have all decided to work together to make their district dry. The four sets of officers—city, county, state and federal—never work together anywhere in the United States. If they did, America would be dry before sundown today. And there can be no real test of Prohibition until there is full cooperation between all branches of government.

In the FEBRUARY COSMOPOLITAN Mr. Shepherd will answer the question: "What Are We Drinking?" He presents an array of astonishing facts about the imitation liquors and home brews which have been analyzed at the Government Laboratories.

Skin Deep

(Continued from page 83)

"The pearls which you admire so much are not mine," she said. "Mrs. Grant-Grahame only loaned them to me for the evening."

"But they are yours by right, anyway," he protested. "Will she sell them to you?"

"No," she replied soberly. "I couldn't buy them anyway. They're worth thousands of dollars."

"I know it."

"Wouldn't you like me without jewelry?"

"My dear," he whispered, "I'd adore you without—" he paused, "—without reservation," he concluded. "I was merely feeling a fellow sympathy for the pearls, because they too will have to be away from you tonight."

They closed that restaurant up and went to another, not so noisy but wickeder. The young people were shocked but the others who had grown old with Manhattan were only bored.

So was Terence Regan, who was waiting outside with the car—bored, peeved and jealous.

V

THE party was over.

Mrs. Grant-Grahame, frankly tired, was sitting before her dressing table and Clarice was taking the pins out of her mistress's hair.

They both discovered it about the same time. Clarice happening to glance in the mirror saw, first, Mrs. Grant-Grahame's eyes fastened on her own neck and then lifting her gaze saw, with horror, what her mistress had just noticed.

The pearl necklace was gone!

"Oh!" Clarice's very soul escaped her in that exclamation. There was so little to say and the panic that closed upon her throat was so terrifying.

She dropped to the floor, evening gown and all, and began searching. They were not there. Neither were they caught in the lining of the wrap which she had worn. They were gone, absolutely and finally.

"Perhaps they fell off in the car," suggested the older woman, trying to be kindly but nevertheless upset herself.

"I'll go and see," Clarice volunteered.

She scurried downstairs and out to the garage. Terence was busy wiping off the slight moisture which had gathered on the exposed nickel work.

He did not seem to be particularly surprised to see her.

"Mrs. Grant-Grahame's pearls are gone," she told him, "and I came to see if they fell off in the car."

"Oh!" said Terence in pretended disappointment. "I thought you came out to kiss your everyday beau good night."

He offered to take her in his arms but she pushed away from him.

"Oh, then I ain't good enough for you!"

"I am too much worried to want to be pawed over," she explained.

Terence refused to be pacified. "If I was your handsome dago friend now—"

"That has nothing to do with the case, and besides, it is none of your business. I've got to find those pearls."

"That's none of my business either," retorted Terence sourly. "Go ahead and find them."

Clarice turned on the dome light of the limousine and searched every inch of the car. There was no sign of the missing pearls.

Terence was waiting when she had finished. She knew what he was waiting for, too, but she was too worried to be annoyed.

As she passed him by a black rage clutched at Terence's heart and he wanted to break and destroy, preferably something alive that would struggle and cry out for mercy.

VI

THERE was nothing further to be done that night. Mrs. Grant-Grahame tried to be as nice as she could when Clarice reported her lack of luck, but the maid could not help feeling that the older woman was regretting her generosity.

"We will advertise for it in the papers tomorrow, but I don't suppose there is much chance of getting it back that way as I presume it was stolen from you in one of those restaurants we visited after the opera."

"But no one touched me," protested Clarice. "No one, that is, except Mr. Haynes, and of course he's all right."

"Hm!" the old lady doubted, "I wonder! Mrs. Homer told me that she had only met him this evening and that he was introduced by a letter from a man she had not seen in ten years. Did Mr. Haynes show any special interest in the pearls?"

"He spoke of them, madam, and he seemed to know that they were genuine and very valuable."

"Oh, he did, did he? Tomorrow we will see if Mr. Peter Haynes can be found."

"Oh, it couldn't be Mr. Haynes!" Clarice objected.

"Why not?"

"It just couldn't be, that's all." Clarice was almost tearful.

The old lady eyed her shrewdly. "My dear, the men we fall in love with can be just as villainous as the ones we have never met. Go to bed, child. Spend the rest of the night falling out of love with him. You'll find it the wisest thing to do for a good many reasons."

VII

TELEPHONING to Mrs. Homer the next day unveiled the fact that she did not know where Peter Haynes was staying.

This was not particularly reassuring. Mrs. Grant-Grahame notified the police department and an officer was sent over to take a report on the case. She gave him all the facts she could, including a description of Peter Haynes.

Clarice, in despair, went about her daily tasks listlessly. The mainspring was gone out of her existence. If she had been able to analyze her feelings she would have discovered that she was appalled less by the loss of the necklace than by the destruction of her faith in Peter Haynes.

During dinner the telephone rang and Clarice who answered it took a report from police headquarters.

"We've got him," declared the voice at the other end of the wire. Clarice's heart jumped when she asked who.



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MR. C. E. BROOKS

"This Peter Haynes, or whatever his alias is, and he's got the goods on him."

"The necklace?"

"Yes. We caught him cold. He even had it in his pocket. If Mrs. Grant-Grahame is at home we will bring him over for identification."

"She's at home," Clarice admitted and hung up.

She conveyed the report to her mistress and then for some reason or other hesitated before leaving the room.

The old lady, more intuitive and perhaps kinder than most, sensed the cause of the hesitation and said, "Well?"

"I'll never see him again," Clarice stated, "never, never, never. Would you permit me to be there tonight when they bring him in?"

"Why, of course, child."

"And would it be all right if I wore that dress again? Just so—" she looked down—"just so he'll never know I'm not real? Even if he is a thief he's the only man I ever really cared for and I'd like to have him remember me the way I was last night."

Mrs. Grant-Grahame, entirely mollified at the prospect of regaining her jewelry, assented.

"Of course you may, dear. We ought to do all we can for a man who will probably spend the rest of his life in jail."

VIII

So it was a more radiant beauty than he expected who was waiting with Mrs. Grant-Grahame when Peter Haynes was ushered into the drawing room, accompanied rather obtrusively by a square-toed gent who kept solicitously near.

"Is this the man?" the detective asked.

"This is certainly Mr. Haynes," Mrs. Grant-Grahame replied. She turned to Clarice. "There is no question about it, is there, Clarice?"

Clarice placed her hand to her heart as if something hurt there. She whispered: "No. I am quite sure it is Mr. Haynes. But I also am sure that he is absolutely guiltless."

"But my dear," Mrs. Grant-Grahame remonstrated impatiently, "there is no question about it. It is proved."

"You needn't pay any attention to what she says," Mrs. Grant-Grahame turned to the police officer. "The fool girl is in love with him."

"Do you think so?" Peter Haynes asked eagerly. "I didn't dare hope."

The police officer went on in routine fashion. "I've brung the beads along with me," he said. "I can't turn them over to you yet but the chief wants you to say that they are O. K."

"Very well," the owner answered.

The detective reached into an inside pocket and brought out a carefully sealed envelope which he handed over.

The lady broke the seal, spread the contents on the table and gazed at them in fascination. So did Clarice.

"But these are not my pearls," declared the dowager in troubled amazement. "This strand has a platinum barrel clasp and mine, which was purchased years ago, had a simple gold spring hook. I think this strand is a little longer too."

"But we found it right on him," the officer insisted. "They've got to be your pearls. You suspected him of stealing

Cosmopolitan for January, 1922

them and we rounded him up with the goods. What more do you want?"

"Perhaps there is some other explanation," Mrs. Grant-Grahame offered, mystified and not at all convinced. "Young man, where did you get these pearls?"

"From Tiffany's," he replied promptly. "Tomorrow morning the man who sold them to me can verify this statement, but the dumb-bells in the police department wouldn't listen to me."

"Well, why should we?" returned the detective. "The story is too thin."

"It does sound peculiar," Mrs. Grant-Grahame admitted. "How did you happen to purchase these jewels?" she asked of the young man.

"The explanation is really rather embarrassing under the circumstances," he offered, "but I suppose I'll have to give it. Last night I admired the strand of pearls which Miss Clarice was wearing. She told me that they were not hers but that you had only loaned them for the occasion and that she had nothing of the sort of her own. On her they were so perfect that I have been hunting the shops all day long trying to find a strand equally beautiful."

"But," interrupted the dowager, "you couldn't think that Clarice would accept an almost priceless gift from a man she had just met!"

"Quite true," Peter admitted. "I did not intend to offer them to her right away. I was going to wait until a much later date, after I had asked her to be my wife."

The only sound in the room was a slight gasp from Clarice.

"Good heavens!" Mrs. Grant-Grahame demanded. "Are you proposing to this girl right here in the presence of me and the metropolitan police?"

"I might as well," Peter asserted defiantly. "I don't think my chances are so good as they would be with the help of a little moonlight but my hand has been forced. Clarice, will you marry me?"

"No."

"What?"

That exclamation came from both Mrs. Grant-Grahame and Peter Haynes, himself.

The old lady continued: "I don't know what's the matter with you, Clarice. You know you told me you cared for him this evening when I was against him, and now that I have seen him again I approve of him myself."

"Please!" implored Peter.

"It wouldn't be fair," Clarice explained, still blushing furiously and talking to Mrs. Grant-Grahame as though it would be easier that way. "He doesn't know who I am and what I do. If madam will excuse me for a few moments I'll return and give him the real reason."

Mrs. Grant-Grahame, who understood the request, gave permission with a nod.

Clarice departed, leaving behind her two very mystified men and one smiling old lady.

IX

THERE seemed to be very little to talk about. Even Mrs. Grant-Grahame's social experience failed to provide any precedent as to what to do to entertain a plain-clothes detective.

Shortly after Clarice's departure the single parlor maid whom Mrs. Grant-Grahame retained in her employ came in and announced that Terence, the chauffeur, wished to speak to his mistress.

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"After a while," she replied.
"He said it was about the lost necklace,"
the girl explained.

"The lost necklace?" the old lady ex-
claimed. "Send him in."

The atmosphere of the room became
electrical once more. Mrs. Grant-
Grahame thoughtfully covered the pearl
necklace on the table with a corner of the
oriental runner.

Terence came in. He seemed rather
surprised at the presence of the men, but
Mrs. Grant-Grahame began to question
him.

"What's this about my pearls?"

"I've got them, ma'am."

"Where?"

"Here," he tapped his breast pocket.
"I came to return them."

He extracted the glowing beads and
handed them to his wondering mistress.

"May I ask, Terence, how these come
to be in your possession?"

He fumbled his cap and looked down.
"I hate to tell you, ma'am. I haven't
slept a wink since I got them."

"Neither has anyone else. Cut out
the description of your insomnia and tell
us the facts."

"Well, you remember when Clarice
came out to the garage last night to pre-
tend to look for the pearls?"

"Yes."

"She gave them to me then. We were
going to run away tonight with them, but
I got to thinking about it how you have
always been so kind to me, and besides
I ain't a thief anyway and I decided to
come to you and tell the truth."

"You mean to insinuate that she had
them all the time and only pretended to
lose them to give her time to get away
with them?"

The chauffeur nodded.

There was a tap on the door.

"Come in," said Mrs. Grant-Grahame.

The door opened slowly and there was
Clarice, the real Clarice in the black uni-
form of service, very pale.

Her eyes sought first those of her mis-
tress and then passed pleadingly to those of
the man who had asked her to marry him.

"You see," she explained simply,
"why I couldn't say, 'yes.' This is the
real reason."

Peter Haynes laughed happily. "Did
you think that would make any differ-
ence?"

Right before their very eyes was worked
a miracle. The soul of Clarice expanded,
fear and doubt dropped from her, also
the mental guise of servant; her head and
chin came up and her eyes sparkled as they
met those of her lover squarely.

"Say," exclaimed the detective, who,
not being a dunce, was wise to what was
going on, "you ain't going to fall for that
dame, are you, just after this other guy
said that she stole the junk?"

"Sure," declared Peter. "You aren't
going to believe that story, are you?"

"I don't know why not."

"After I'm married I'm going to start
a training school for New York police-
men," Peter Haynes offered satirically.
"If you will promise not to ask any ques-
tions I'll explain exactly what happened."

"First of all this estimable young man
is in love with Clarice. Isn't that so?"

Terence nodded sourly.

"How did you know that?" the police
officer interrupted.

Cosmopolitan Educational Guide

(Continued from page 7)

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"Any man with half a mind would be in love with her. The solution is absurdly simple, isn't it? The next point is the fact that Terence was extremely jealous last night. I deduced this from the fact that if I had been in his shoes I would have been too.

"Terence thought he saw himself losing out, and the thought was enough to make him commit crime. You see I know this because I would have felt the same way myself. So when in cleaning up the car last night he found the pearls he slipped them into his pocket with no particular plan in view but wondering how he might turn them to account in his suit for Clarice's favors. When she came out it occurred to him that maybe he could trade them to her for something he wanted very much, but Clarice proved to be unexpectedly cold, perhaps even rebuffed him. That made him so mad he laid awake all night trying to think up some way of getting revenge on her. If he couldn't have her himself he would make sure of spoiling her pie anyway. No one else should have her.

Obviously nothing would do this more surely than the tale he has just told you. In general it was very artistic, especially that touch about his own troubled honesty.

"Terence," the young man turned upon the chauffeur and addressed him: "If you should cause this young lady's arrest upon this false charge I would see to it that you paid the extreme penalty for false imprisonment and conspiracy, but if you withdraw your charge we shall part the best of friends and you will have the satisfaction of having given my wife the most prized wedding present which she will receive—a clear name and an absolute title to happiness. Come on, Terence, are you on?"

The boy, for he was only a boy after all, looked from one to the other, first at Peter Haynes and then at Clarice. On the face of the girl his eyes hung piteously. She was smiling.

He tore his glance away with a wrench and gulped: "All right, sir. I lied. Everything you said was true but, my God, if you knew how I loved her!"

"I do," said Peter. "Would you mind shaking hands? In your place I would have done the same as you."

The chauffeur accepted his rival's grasp and then turned blindly from the room.

Mrs. Grant-Grahame broke the silence which succeeded the young man's exit.

"Well, Clarice," she said, "I don't suppose that your new strand of pearls will look nearly so well over that maid's costume but I'll bet that young speed artist is anxious to see if they'll fit. Officer, will you come out with me and put our cook through the third degree? I think she's concealing a huckleberry pie that belongs to me and we'll get it out of her if we have to use a blackjack."

When they were alone, Mr. Peter Haynes looked over at the about to be Mrs. Peter Haynes and grinned.

"How about taking a steamboat for Europe tomorrow afternoon?" he asked.

"All right," she assented meekly.

"Correct answer. We'll attend to the intermediate details in the morning."

The Breath of Scandal

(Continued from page 42)

as easy a basis with them as with girls. There are men, probably, who—you say—would tell you anything frankly and to whom, you would say, you could tell anything. Is that not so?"

Marjorie startled a little and flushed. "Please go on," she begged.

"Whereas the fact is that no man you have ever talked to has told you even so much as half the truth. They have told you, probably, how they have felt toward you and your sort but never how they feel toward what we may term, for convenience, other women. For you are a good girl; all your friends are good girls, living in prosperous, honorable, protected homes. A man of the sort you meet would consider himself lower than a dog—and his friends would put him down below the lowest cur if they let him live at all—if ever once he adopted within himself an attitude toward you which he may, without loss of a single friend, persistently hold toward other women.

He had not avoided her while speaking; but now his glance shifted from her to the dictation machine on his desk. It was plain he considered he had said all he wished and he desired her to go.

"Thank you," she said, subdued. "Thank you very much. I am what I am—so ignorant that I can't even understand an answer as to why my father has done what he has—because I live in a prosperous, honorable, protected home, you said. Then, if I did not, I would soon become able to understand?"

Rinderfeld looked up so quickly that he almost jerked. "Too soon," he said sharply. "The women like you who never understand make the world worth living in, I think. I'm not sure," he qualified honestly. "It is one of the anomalies of life I'm trying to make out purely from a philosophical standpoint. It has nothing to do with my business. At least, don't you try the understanding. Leave that, like you leave other unpleasant items, to men like me. We'll handle it for you."

His hand moved slightly on his desk;

she did not see him touch a button but she heard behind her the almost imperceptible buzzer on the other side of the wall in the waiting room; and she knew that the signal was given to show in the florid-faced, gray-haired man. Rinderfeld moved in courtly manner, toward the farther door directly communicating with the hallway.

"At any time telephone me, in emergency, here or at my home number. Some one always knows where I am." He had returned wholly to business; and she made a businesslike reply and stepped into the hall.

VIII

BEFORE departing from Clark Street with Billy, Marjorie experienced a further enlightening sensation. Billy's presence had nothing to do with it; in fact, it was in opposition to his efforts that she had the experience, for Billy was doing his best to return her as rapidly as possible to her familiar environment of Michigan Avenue and the boulevard route home to Evanston and to reimpose her in the formal modes of thinking and feeling which had been hers. But she had no wish to reenter so immediately her world of not even so much as half the truth; and her further experience on Clark Street was suddenly to feel, by one of those flashes of perceptivity which amaze one with a demonstration of ones dull narrowness before, that Clark Street and the streets beyond—west and north and south, in their endless number—concerned her. How vitally and with what intimacy had Clearedge Street concerned her! She wanted to stand on the sidewalk and gaze about at the people passing and think of the men as men of the manner Rinderfeld knew. But Billy had kept a cab waiting for her and he got her into it.

"Well, Marjorie," he demanded, as soon as the car started, "what did he have to tell you?" So she repeated to him Rinderfeld's analysis of the danger threatening them.

"Of course I never thought of it that way before," she finished. "But you must

have, Billy; you're a lawyer. Why didn't you explain to me how it would come out—if it does?"

"That's Rinderfeld for you!" Billy countered. "You couldn't have a much better show-up of him. What does he care about the right or wrong of any case? Try to cover up—scrape yourself clear of the consequences—that's Rinderfeld's bible. He doesn't correct a thing."

"Probably he doesn't," Marjorie admitted. "But he does try to suggest a way in which you may be left alone to settle your own family trouble without the whole world interfering. And I don't believe he thinks I'm trying to scrape out of consequences."

Billy sat away from her, feeling injured and that she had held him cheap. Then he saw her face, saw her lips tremble as she tried to steady them, saw her catch herself up bravely, and he was ashamed of himself. He called her name, almost with a sob, and he caught both her hands between his own big ones.

"Oh, Marjorie, Marjorie, don't you suppose I'd have told you all that, if it could really do you any good? But you'll find out, it won't put off even Stanway! And if it does, it can't save you from facing what's before; and you'll—we'll only make it harder and harder, dearie, by putting it off!"

He drew away one of his hands and hastily pulled down the curtains of the cab and then he put his arm about her and begged her to rest on his shoulder. But she could not. The confidence which she had gained when with Rinderfeld was vanishing. "I'm going to see father now, remember," she reminded Billy.

He had forgotten, though Marjorie had told him, that her given reason for her journey downtown today was to visit the hospital. When she arrived, she learned that her father's improvement continued and that she would be allowed to see him for five minutes.

She found him very white in his narrow, white bed in the little, private room, with a nurse beside him; but he was conscious

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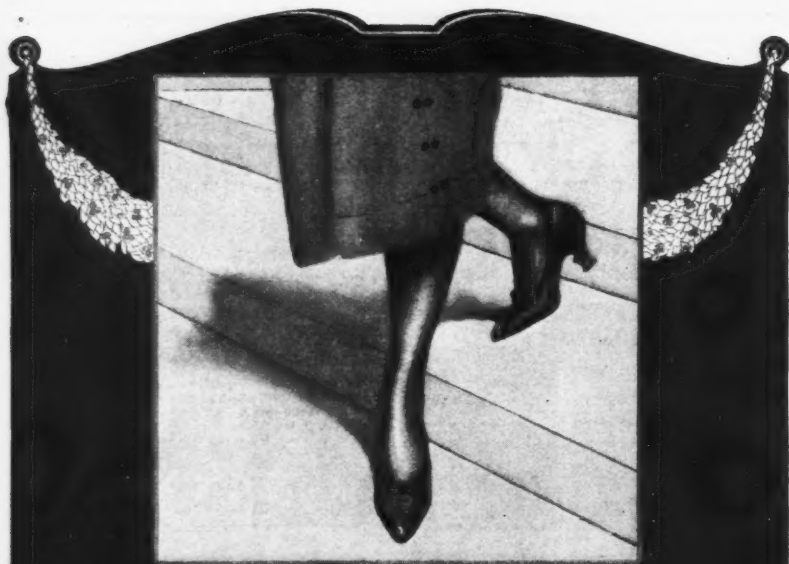
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and his head was clear and, indeed, he was not unlike himself. His eyes met hers and gazed into hers in his old, loving manner; his lips smiled at her in fond reassurance.

"I'm going to be all right again soon, Margy," he said, clasping tighter on her hand which she slipped into his.

That weak pressure almost made her cry; and she tossed back her head and shook her tears away. How could he have sinned, as he had, and kept his conscience so clear? Yet it was not strange that his manner toward her had not changed, she reflected after a minute; for she was certain that Dr. Grantham would not yet have informed him of her presence at Clearedge Street; and he was not more guilty today than last week or last month or before. The change was in herself because she had learned; and she wondered if she had never known him with a clear conscience or whether, if she knew the world as Rinderfeld did, she would believe that men like her father regarded his sin so lightly that it cast no cloud over their consciences and that its effect upon them was only the fear of scandal.

She would not let Billy accompany her home; and, starting away alone in the taxicab, she passed another, approaching the hospital, and having one passenger, a woman. Marjorie had only a glimpse of her and more of her figure than her face, but she half leaped from her seat in the certainty that the woman was Mrs. Russell.

Marjorie stopped her cab and waited until she saw that the other car halted before the hospital and the passenger got out, and evidently having told the driver to wait, went into the building. But now she did not look quite so much like Mrs. Russell. "No," Marjorie argued with herself, "Mrs. Russell would not dare. Rinderfeld would not let her."

She had late luncheon at home, for her mother had left for the hospital a few minutes before her arrival. As neighbors were beginning to hear of Mr. Hale's illness, the telephone rang frequently for inquiries; and several calls came from the office and from his friends downtown. Flowers were delivered and some people stopped in at the house. Marjorie let the servants continue the repetition of the information which the family was giving out, but when Clara Sedgwick called, Marjorie had her come in.

She brought the news that some people were saying that Mr. Hale was not at home but had been taken to a hospital in Chicago for a serious operation. She was not a gossipy girl, Clara, and she did not try to trick Marjorie into telling more than she wished, but, after frankly relating what she had heard, Clara asked if the Hales wanted it denied.

Marjorie said, yes; probably it was better to deny it but that it was true; and after Marjorie admitted this, it was plain that Clara was satisfied and suspected nothing more. So Marjorie gained another proof of the astuteness of Felix Rinderfeld who, having a serious secret to conceal, had not made the mistake of publishing a story which hid nothing, but who had supplied a less serious secret for curious friends to discover, which satisfied them when discovered.

Clara stayed and made an effort to interest Marjorie by going into the details of favors for a dance set for next week;

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then she launched upon the novelties which were being suggested to the entertainment committee of the golf club to vary the usual monotony of golf for men, bridge for women on Saturday afternoons through the approaching season.

Marjorie honestly attempted to make herself interested, but she could not. What filled her mind was amazement that fripperies like these had previously fascinated her, and that the planning and performing of them had given her satisfaction.

No wonder Rinderfeld found her so ignorant of the world that he realized it was useless to try to explain what had happened to her; no wonder that the few men, with whom she held anything approaching a conversation, had satisfied her when they spoke in never so much as half truths concerning themselves and their world.

It astounded her now suddenly to begin realizing how small and shut in was the world of the daughter and wife of a successful man. Sitting by her window one morning while she watched, fearing the approach of Mr. Stanway or of Russell or some one from Clearedge Street coming in attack upon her home, she counted the delivery wagons which stopped—the grocer's, the butcher's, the ice van, Marshall Field's, Carson Pirie's, Lord's, a florist's boy, Borden's Creamery, a laundry wagon, one from the cleaner's and a runaway bringing a man to estimate on the decorating to be done soon: eleven bearing to the house materials and service to supplement the service of the three maids and one man established within and to further obviate necessity of effort on the part of her mother and herself.

Now her father—or rather Gregg Mowbray acting in the man's place of her father, temporarily disabled—had employed Felix Rinderfeld as a specialist in this present crisis which threatened; and here she was at home, assigned to duty in aiding in the protection of her mother if Mr. Stanway or Russell eluded them in the outer circle of defense they had flung about her home; but otherwise they were keeping her ignorant even of what they were doing to shield her.

Billy did not know; for, when she asked him, he told her uncomfortably that Gregg and Rinderfeld on that day—it was the same on which she counted the delivery wagons—were up to something; they wouldn't tell him what, but Billy had discovered that Gregg had not been going to his office for a couple of days; and later Marjorie learned that Gregg hadn't returned to the apartment for two nights and Billy was worried.

What had happened was that Russell had reappeared. Not about Clearedge Street, for he was not quite bold enough to show himself there yet; but he had returned to his haunts a little farther south in the city where Cuncliffe's salesman, Nyman, had first heard of him and in the neighborhood of the particular private still with which Russell previously had established a connection. And the cause of Gregg's absence from his office was that Gregg had been looking for him in that vicinity, for it was just the sort of place where a man who had shot some one—and who couldn't be sure yet whether he'd be taken up for it or whether he could make big money out of it—would feel his way about for a while.

Gregg learned of the place from Nyman and had refrained from reporting his plans not only to Billy but also to Rinderfeld; for Gregg knew Rinderfeld well enough by that time to become certain that Rinderfeld, knowing what Gregg did, would have insisted upon relieving him—or at least upon re-informing him—with a professional handler of men like Russell; and Gregg would not have that; first, because he had, himself, to do something violent and effective for Marjorie in these days; and second, he wanted to determine what, and how much of it, was to be done.

The place was one of those bright glass front and dingy clap-board-side saloons, with rattan screen and swinging doors just inside and with black, sour-smelling floor and long oak bar behind the screen and, in back, a fair sized, liquor-and-tobacco-reeking room with six round tables and a couple of small, one table, private rooms opening off it. "Kilkerry's" was the name in raised, partly peeled gilt letters on the board over the door from which the draft beer advertisement and the formal "Ale and Porter" plate had been torn in deference to the eighteenth amendment; but everybody knew what "Kilkerry's" served.

Across those cigar-scorched, dented tabletops Russell had made his original boasts to his companions that he would get satisfaction or Hale; and the patrons of Kilkerry's, having read in the newspapers of the sudden illness of the general manager of Tri-State Products and Material Corporation on the same night that Russell disappeared, put two and two together, audibly and often; and openly they announced the answer.

"Sick!" puffed one Simmons, from a chair where, he said, Russell had sat when he, Simmons, occupied the seat Gregg was in. "I bet that bird took sick sudden! Wha's matter wi' Russell, th' fool? Don't he want to collect? Not a peep in the papers, d'you see that? Hale's sick; that's all they dare tell. Say, can Georgie Russell collect?"

So Simmons expected Russell back; all the regulars at Kilkerry's expected him; for there he had boasted; there he would come to gloat when he considered it safe. At first Gregg looked in at Kilkerry's only a couple of times a day and then, when he became more of a regular at Kilkerry's he noticed another stranger who was in the process of regularizing himself, also a heavy man, tall as Gregg and twice as thick through. He bought just a bit too freely for others and talked not quite enough, Gregg thought; but nobody else seemed suspicious of the fellow who made himself known by the name of Hershy.

Happening not to be at Kilkerry's when Russell reported, Gregg came into the back room about seven o'clock one evening to find them all together—Simmons and seven or eight of the other regulars, Hershy who was buying just then and a big, black-haired, black-browed man who must be Russell. Sybil Russell had chosen physically powerful men, Gregg thought when he looked over this man who was big as Hale and much younger and with large, strong hands showing black hair on his wrists. Hershy was handing him raw, yellow whisky and already Russell was drunk; Simmons was spluttering drunk. Hershy was pretending to be drunk.

They had reached the stage in which



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they were proclaiming Russell as a great moral agent.

"You showed 'im, eh, Georgie! . . . You put 'im in the hospital, I'll say . . . teach 'im to hang 'round home for a change . . . teach 'im the ten commandments."

Russell gestured with a great hand for chance to speak and his voice rose alone. "Did I do right, boys?"

"Eah! Yeah! Do 'im right now, Georgie. Hold 'im up! Tell 'im you've come back to give yourself to the police for shootin' 'im; charge 'im five thousand not to . . . And 'ave it on your conscience for five thousand, George? Tell 'im ten and cheap at the price! . . . Heh! Forget the shootin'; go back of it. Sue 'im for alienation of affections . . . never mind when he met her . . . say it was whenever you want . . . he'll pay before he'll 'ave anybody find out why he was at the 'ospital."

Simmons pulled Gregg into the group and pounded his back and Gregg pounded other backs in return in the celebration over the return of Russell to clean up; his friends were for him and no one was more inseparable from him than Hershy.

Indeed, Hershy evidently wanted Russell all to himself; he bought another round of colored alcohol and Simmons ceased even to splutter; a couple of the others got sleepy and Hershy started leading Russell away. That suited Gregg well enough, especially when he found that Russell refused to let Hershy push him into the cab which Hershy had waiting. It seemed Russell had been arrested once and taken to the station in a cab; Hershy was not quick enough to abandon his original plan and Russell became frightened and suspicious of him.

"Wha' ziz man want o' me?" Russell appealed, grabbing hold of Gregg's arm. "I ask you, have I ever done anything but right? Was I—justified or not?"

Gregg did not make the mistake of trying to lead him; he merely let Russell keep his hold and walked on away from Hershy's cab, leaving Hershy nothing to do but follow when they turned down an alley beyond Kilkerry's.

It was dark there behind the buildings and nobody about; it was as good a place as could be found for settlement of differences with Hershy, representing—so Gregg was sure—Stanway and polite business blackmail, even lower in its essential than the ugly affair Russell's friends advised.

"Get along, Hershy," said Gregg "You're not invited."

"Yeah!" agreed Russell. "Get along!"

Hershy's hand came down on Gregg's shoulder, and tried to pull him from Russell. Gregg squared around and Hershy struck him on the side of the head.

Gregg's right arm went down; his knees bent; all at once he got together; his arm came up hooked; his knees straightened; and as his whole body was thrusting up, the heavy hulk of Russell's weight slipped off his left side and Gregg almost leaped as he struck Hershy's jaw and knocked Hershy's head back and dropped him in the alley.

"Ka-yo!" gurgled Russell with delight. "Ka-yo! Prop him up and hitmagain."

But Hershy was propping himself up; he was not knocked out, for he moved, feeling for a gun, maybe, Gregg thought, as he got Russell quickly about an ash barrel, up through an area and he went out on the street, with Russell lolling on him in maudlin admiration.

He had to endure the admiration as he supported the big man along. Where? Gregg had never had any too definite destination; now none of those which he had tentatively fixed on, satisfied him. He wanted to take Russell far away, as the first consideration; and he had seen the result of Hershy's attempt to get him into a motor car.

The puffing and bell of switch engine caught Gregg's ear; a headlight gleamed across the street and gates went down with warning clangor. When Gregg brought Russell to the crossing, he started down beside the tracks without positive intention at first; chiefly he was keeping Russell moving and interested. Then he observed that they were beside a string of box cars, empty probably, which were being made up into a train for return to

the West. One car had the door open, and, halting, Russell thrust both his hands in the straw on the floor of the car; then, exerting his strength, he sprang up and thrust himself into the car.

The fellow could have had no purpose but, perhaps, to lie down in the straw and sleep; for that was what he did. Gregg, satisfied, got in the car and sat beside him. In a few minutes came the shock and jangle which told that the engine had picked up this string of cars; the train started, gradually gathered speed and soon was out of the city and, evidently was a fast, through freight which would make few stops. The train crew apparently were unaware that anyone was in this car; when a brakeman passed on top he never halted and no one had looked into the door.

For Gregg's purpose with Russell, he could hardly have chosen a better place; yet Gregg, as he reviewed that purpose, never doubted it so much as now. He had heard that Russell was big and strong yet he had not expected quite all the man he had found; and Russell, when he awoke from this stupored sleep, undoubtedly would be ugly; also he would be rested while Gregg now dared not rest. He had to sit up and watch.

There were other ways to do for Russell, Gregg could not help thinking; but only one sporting one—one way, that is, in which Gregg Mowbry could do it, or try to do it, and live with himself afterward. If he failed, probably he wouldn't live at all, so there was no use bothering about that. Though he had said nothing to anyone else about what he'd taken on, he had taken it on with himself; and he wasn't going to quit. So, as the night went darker and colder, he sat beside Russell and watched him. Once Gregg felt over him, found a loaded revolver—likely the one with which Russell had shot Mr. Hale, Gregg thought—and he tossed the weapon down into a river. Then, thinking of Marjorie and of Billy and her father and Mrs. Russell and Marjorie again . . . Marjorie . . . he sat on the floor beside Russell and waited for him to awake.

In spite of the fact that Gregg and Rinderfeld have taken charge of the effort to conceal what happened at the Russell apartment, Marjorie finds herself dragged into the conspiracy—finds that she, as well as Gregg, has to fight for her father's job, for the family honor and to keep away the Breath of Scandal. How she does her part and how Gregg does his is told in the next instalment of this virile novel in the FEBRUARY COSMOPOLITAN.

Grease-Paint

(Continued from page 32)

observed as she sat with face carefully veiled from a too-revealing sun. "I'm used to snow peaks that touch the sky." He turned to the more absorbing scenery of a woman's face misted by a fluttering veil. "No sir—when I come east, I don't want this. I want New York—the excitement, the thrill of it. I want—you."

It was said softly. His voice held the word like a caress and looking up, she read in his eyes what she had read in many men's—except that added was the new element of awe.

The new element became of a sudden infinitely dear to her. She let him keep it. Except when their hands brushed accidentally—or so it seemed to him—they did not touch save for the clasp that

helped her into a cab or expressed "good night." The warmth of his arms closed round her only in the dance. She met the light of his eyes with her own only across restaurant tables. No débutante could have held herself more aloof—perhaps not quite so much so. But Naomi did not play the ingénue. It was her world knowledge—world old—that fascinated him, that made her, as he had said, different.

She managed to fill his days with joy of her when she was with him, with longing for her when she cleverly denied him her companionship. She was the hundred women to one man which her training had taught her to be, knowing that to him she would thus become the one woman.

And simultaneously there flared into her

own soul an eagerness of which Naomi Stokes had long since counted herself incapable—as if that brown-eyed, ardent gaze held her with the same absorbing quality of his arms when they danced.

Meanwhile in a hotel room that was just four walls, another pair of gray eyes, not veiled, not mysterious, watched for him more and more anxiously, saw him less and less frequently. The girl from the West whose first visit to New York was to have opened up a fairyland of adventure for her and the boy she loved—the visit they had planned together—found its streets empty caverns at the foot of towering cliffs, saw in hotels and theaters and restaurants to which McConnell and his wife took her night after night in the hope of diverting

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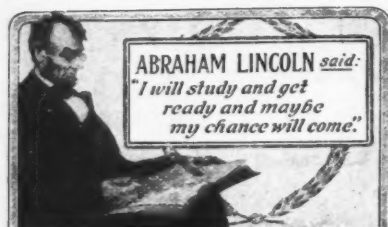
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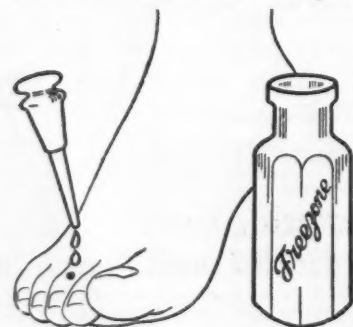
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her, only the possibility, eager yet dreaded, of singling from the crowd Bill Dixon and the woman who had taken him from her.

She tried to hide her misery from the anxious eyes of her chaperones but because she was young, a thousand years younger than Naomi, she could not hide it from the one she loved, and, her quivering chin, her reproachful reminders of engagements he had overlooked, sent his mind and feet hurrying back to the woman whose red lips and drooping lids thrilled him like the dizzying lights of Broadway, like a draught of wine he had never before tasted.

"Why does a girl think, because you've been together all your lives," he blurted out one night as he and Naomi drove through the jerk and jam of traffic hold-up, "that she has a right to know your comings and goings as if you belonged to her? Good heavens, a fellow can change his mind, can't he?"

She leaned over, touched her fingers to the hand against his knee.

"Don't be angry, Billie-boy," she whispered. "I like to hear you laugh."

His other hand closed quickly over the white fingers.

"What is it you've done to me? I always thought caring about a woman meant wanting to be with her because she liked the things I do, because we understood each other. That's the way I felt about—" he broke off. "But you—I want to be with you because you're so different—because I don't always understand you. I can't get enough of it—of looking at you, of listening to you. Naomi, do you care—a little bit?"

She lifted her eyes, lifted her lips, forgetting the game she was playing, forgetting the stakes. Then before he saw the move, she drew back. Not yet! She answered him instead with a shadowy smile and the long silent pressure of the hand in his.

CHAPTER III

It was an afternoon of late March, grim and forbidding, as if winter had thrown a last shadow across oncoming spring. The steam heat, turned off in the chorus dressing rooms during a week of balmy weather, suddenly sputtered on and sang through the whole matinee performance.

Naomi came out of the stage entrance, fur coat hugged about her, and shivering a bit, made for the curb to hail a taxi. As she glanced up and down the street at the ant-like army of cars; one of them slid toward her and a man stepped down.

"Why, hello, Marsha," she reached out a hand, "haven't seen you in weeks."

He took it.

"Jump in."

"Good! Buy me some tea, won't you? I'm frozen."

"We'll have tea at your place. I want to talk to you."

She turned and stared at him as he slammed the door.

His voice didn't sound like Marsha Kent's at all.

"I've called you half a dozen times," he supplemented, "You're never home."

"I'm busy."

"I know you are. That's why I side-tracked you."

He did not speak again until they had

mounted the flight of stairs to her apartment. But as she collected the seldom used tea things, he walked impatiently up and down her living room.

"Naomi, we've always been pretty good friends, haven't we?" he began.

"Friends?"

"Pals then," he corrected, not knowing why.

"Well, yes, I suppose so."

"That's why I'm going to put something up to you. I want you to listen quietly and then I want you to stand by me. Naomi—I've done a lot of things in my young life that I'm not exactly proud of. But the worst that could have been said of me was that I've been a waster. I've wasted one or two fortunes that the old Kents slaved to pile up—on cards—on the wheel—on the ponies—on women—I've never been anything but a waster. But that goes in more senses than one. I've never been a cad. Not until a month ago."

He waited for some response, but Naomi merely struck a match and touched it to the wick of the samovar. If a quick question did flash to her lips, she held it back and kept her eyes lowered.

"You know when that was. I was *non compos mentis* and I egged you into making a bet—"

"In other words, dear Marsha," she filled in his pause, "you want me to let you off on the plea of—well, the undue influence of liquor. Of course I will."

He pushed aside her easy acquiescence with a sweep that almost knocked the cup from her hand. "But that's not all. The bet's not the thing that's bothering me. It's you. You and that boy, Dixon. Naomi, you've got to quit. You've got to, do you hear me?"

"Quit—what?"

"Don't play the innocent! You know what I'm driving at. I've made myself your partner in the job of smashing that boy's life. And I'm telling you—"

"Marsha, men fall easily into the habit of talking to—to some women pretty much as they please, but in the years I've known you, you've never said a word to me that—that hurt. Don't do it now—please."

"Then let him alone. I've been through hell this past week thinking of what I let those two young things in for. McConnell tells me the girl's on the verge of collapse—can't eat, can't sleep, just sits and waits for the boy to come and he stays away. Why, they grew up together, those kids. They were as good as engaged. And now he's chucked her—for you."

He reached out, caught her by both shoulders with hands that shook.

"I must have been crazy to take you up that night and promise not to interfere. If you don't cry quits, here's where I do. Young Dixon's a fine boy—McConnell says one of the finest—and I'm not going to stand to one side and see you smash his life and break that little girl's heart. Understand?"

The eyes that traveled up to his were more weary than he had ever seen them.

"What about my life, Marsha? Doesn't that count—at all? Doesn't it matter that I'd like a chance? That perhaps if I marry Bill Dixon, he'll never know—and I can forget? Doesn't it matter that you'd be helping me away from being a has-been—and all that goes with it?"

"If it was the other way round, Marsha,



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and I was a man and he a girl, you wouldn't see any harm in it, would you? If it were you, Marshy, and a young girl—"

"That's different!"

"Why is it different—why? It's a man standing up for a man where he wouldn't for a woman—that's the only difference. It isn't that you're any better than I am. It's only that you think all men are."

"Look here, Naomi, I know it's hard on you, my putting it the way I have to. But conditions are conditions. We've both faced them too long to try and buck them. You keep away from that boy and you won't regret it. I'll guarantee that—anyway you like. What's it worth—?"

"Marshy—you're not trying to buy me off, are you?"

"Don't put it so baldly—"

He stopped. For her head had gone back and a laugh startlingly high and sharp cut the sudden stillness.

"So you're afraid of me, that's it! It's gone that far. He's declared himself for me—and against her. It's come to a crux, then, and McConnell's asked you to help. Why, I didn't dream it! I couldn't have hoped for so much in such a short time. I wouldn't have believed it."

Even with that high laugh of mockery, her shadowy eyes filled with the vision of the boy fighting—fighting them all doggedly, with hot, flaming defiance—for her—and it was sweeter than the thought of triumph.

Kent's voice broke in, uncompromising as judgment itself.

"I know a way to stop it—without you. I hesitated to use it before. It didn't seem cricket. But I'm going to him now with the plain, unvarnished truth—the story Broadway tells when it hears the name, Naomi Stokes—the story I can add a few chapters to."

"Marshy!"

"I'll show him what a blithering fool he is. I'll prove it the way I can, and we'll see—"

The vision vanished from Naomi's eyes. She caught his arm, clutched it with the clinging fingers of a child who in sleep plunges from dreams into nightmare.

"Marshy—you wouldn't do that! You couldn't! Why, you called yourself my pal. Could pals stab one another like that? Could I think of harming you that way? Not for anybody! And that boy's nothing to you. Nothing! Won't you give me this chance? Just this one. If you knew what it means to me! Marshy, don't turn away. Listen—please—please!"

But he kept his face turned determinedly from the pleading one, from the eyes he had so often smiled into when their mystery piqued and captivated him in idle moments. And in the rigid line of his jaw there was no yielding. He merely tried to tug away from her clinging fingers and a short phrase answered her.

"Do you cry quits—or no?"

She steadied her lips. Her arms fell listlessly. But even as she met the question, it came less in the form he put it than in the thought of what Bill Dixon had come to mean to her. Not ease for herself, not insurance against bleak years ahead, not the road that led away from

terror, but a boy's hearty laugh and ardent eyes, the warm clasp of his hand, the strength of his arms, what it would mean to lose them! That was the thing that counted. A light that lifted the weight of centuries shone through her lashes. A smile that trembled, caught and held her lips.

"It isn't quits, Marshy. No! Either way you win, so we might as well play to the finish."

When he had gone, she sank onto the couch and tears unlike the bitter ones of early dawn and hard noon streaked silently down her cheeks. They were tears of wonder and passionate regret, of gratitude that she, Naomi Stokes, could know this engulfing tenderness. The boy's name came to her lips and saying it over and over, she caressed it. The thing she had never dreamed might come to her was hers. She loved him. Nothing could take that away. After stumbling through the years, she had found in one brief month the dearest thing in the world. And now Marshy was going to snatch it from her! No! She would not let him! She would fight him—the whole world—to keep that which had suddenly become her reason for being.

Yet she realized that she, who had never lacked resources, to whom the game of life had been a game of wits, stood helpless now.

She could only wait.

CHAPTER IV

NAOMI made no pretense of trying to sleep. She did not even resort to the bromide she was in the habit of taking when rest refused to come. At ten she sprang up, hand to the throat that was full, lids covering the eyes that pained.

Yet even in her misery, she did not overlook the careful mask of make-up that was as mechanical a part of her daily toilet as the brushing of her hair, or polishing of her glistening nails. She had grown to avoid facing her mirror without it.

She flung on a negligée of orchid chiffon that clung round her with the afterglow of sunset. But like the orchid, she sought the damp darkness of her living room and sat with head resting against her locked hands for a long time before she made a move to raise the blinds and let in a shaft of sunlight.

She had just lifted one of them when a sharp summons of the bell came from downstairs. She pushed the electric button, and after a moment, opened the door into the shadowy hall.

A girl stood there, a girl with hair like a black cloud and eyes young and gray and tense.

"May I come in, Miss Stokes? You don't know me but my name is Nan Crawford."

She stood with eyes traveling hungrily over the other woman as if to get in that moment the viewpoint of another pair of eyes that no longer sought hers.

"I'm a friend of Bill Dixon," she explained as Naomi said nothing.

Naomi nodded. "I know."

The girl looked up quickly.

"It—it's about Bill I want to see you," she brought out the words with the same halting pause that had marked her hesitation in the doorway.

Naomi motioned her to a chair. The girl's pale face went a tinge whiter. Her lips quivered.

"Miss Stokes, I—I've known Bill Dixon all my life. I've loved him all my life—and I thought he loved me. He used to tell me so. We—we've always loved the same things and done the same things—together—in the same way. We've ridden hours on horseback up into the mountains and gone shooting in the woods—and tramped with hats off and our hair blowing, to places other people didn't know about. When I went away to school and he to college, we used to write each other about our woods and the longing to get back to them—together. We never planned anything—separately. We sort of always—belonged to each other."

She halted once more. It was because she couldn't go on. It was only too clear that she was putting herself through the ordeal of tearing open new wounds for some purpose. Naomi looked away. To play on her own sympathy of course! She wouldn't listen. It would do no good anyway.

"I'm trying to tell you, Miss Stokes, how I love Bill Dixon, how much I want his happiness. And now he loves you. Oh, I don't blame him. You're very beautiful—more beautiful than I could ever dream of being. You're like some gorgeous flower in a conservatory. I've never seen anyone like you. At first I thought I could—perhaps—win him back—but I couldn't. Not from you. I—I wouldn't know how. I've thought about it a lot—and I—at first I thought I couldn't live through it. But I've got to now. Bill can't help loving you. I don't blame him for that." She got up suddenly and brushed a hand across her eyes. In the poise of her body, head thrown back, lips quivering, was life's first big endurance test and her brave attempt to meet it.

"But you've got to love him, Miss Stokes! You've got to make him happy. I'd give my life for him. That's the way you've got to love him, too. If you don't—if you fail him—ever—I'll kill you!"

Waves of astonishment swept over Naomi. Those eyes that burned behind the film of tears! Surely this was not their message! To demand happiness for the man of whom she was being robbed—surely that was not what the girl had come for.

"My dear child—" Naomi began, instinctively speaking as if to one years younger.

"I mean it! You think I wouldn't, but I'm not afraid. I have nothing to lose any more."

She stumbled toward the door, one hand reached out gropingly. There she turned and once more her eyes traveled over the other woman. Naomi felt that from their clear gray gaze she could not shield herself. A girl so near her own age—the girl she might have been! And in that moment she knew that Nan Crawford's words had not been bravado, not foolish threat. She was battling in her own way for the thing she loved.

She opened the door as if, now that her message was given, she could not make her escape quickly enough.

"Make him happy," came strangled. "You must! That's what I came to tell you."

CHAPTER V

THROUGH the window lifted to the sunlight, the shaft with motes dancing in it receded until it slipped away. Naomi had been sitting in the same position ever since her door had shut on a girl stumbling into the dark hallway. All her life she had drifted with the least resistant current and without thinking much. Now, of a sudden, thought had come smashing upon her with the devastating violence of a hurricane.

As daylight grayed, she rose a bit stiffly, and lighted the few lamps that sent a glow through the room. She went into her bedroom and started to dress. Bill was coming at five to take her to dinner. All afternoon she had waited for his usual 'phone call, for the big box of variegated flowers so different from those other men sent her. Neither came, but she was conscious only of the numbness of futility.

She dressed without haste in a plain dark cloth suit, feeling, as the minutes passed, with a curious finality that Bill was not coming. He had never kept her waiting like this.

Yet as the thought swept over her, a loud, long ring came from downstairs. She opened the door and stood with eyes fastened on the dusk. A figure loomed out of it, head bent, feet taking the steps two at a time.

He did not look up until they were in her living room. Then his head went back and the look of desperation he wore made her go to him swiftly and push him into a chair. He sank down without resistance, covering his face with hands he made no attempt to steady. She lifted hers from his shoulders. "What is it, Bill? What's happened?"

"I—I'm late," were his first shaky words. "Sorry."

"But what's happened? Tell me!"

"Naomi—I—" he broke off. "I don't know how to put it. I feel that just telling you is an insult—"

Ah, she knew now! She knew what was coming.

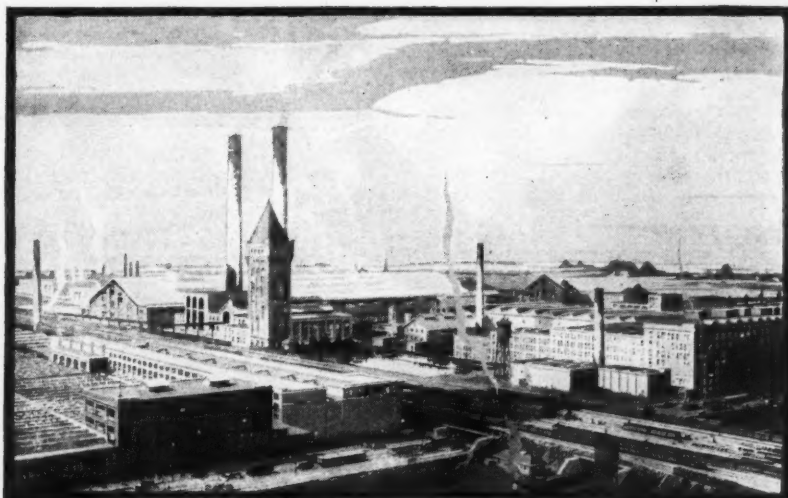
"That man, Kent!" he stumbled on. "They had me all afternoon, he and Alec McConnell. I had to listen to things he said about you. If I'd been a man, I wouldn't have given him the chance to say them."

Eyes clinging to hers, he waited for some question, some denial. He was giving her the chance to strike Marshy's prosecution off the record without one word of cross-examination. He was urging her to give Marshy the lie without even hearing what the man had told him.

All her anguish of the night before had been, like so much feminine anguish, unnecessary. She had only to concoct a story of jealousy or an ancient grudge of Kent's and this boy who had come to mean everything to her would accept it with the gladness of one who doesn't want to question. Yet she turned her face from him and said nothing.

"I listened until I couldn't stand it. They made me! Then I knocked him down. Swine like that ought to be killed!"

"He's not a swine," she found herself saying in a voice that didn't sound like her own. "He was probably telling you the truth for what he thought was your own good."



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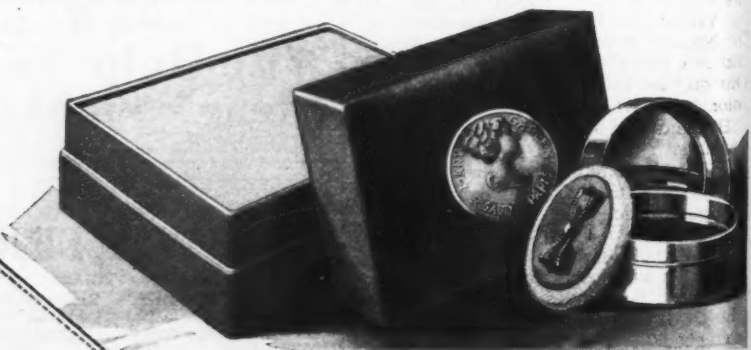
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"Naomi, do you know what you're saying? He accused you of—" he halted.

She took him up without waiting.

"Of things he can prove to you, boy dear. I've known Marshy Kent years and years and he wouldn't tell you anything about me he didn't know he could back up."

His hands were clinched into the hard fists that had sent his informer spinning to the floor. His chin was fighting forward. His eyes fastened on the exotic beauty that was Naomi's, intensified by the fact that she was woman, helpless under the lash of another man. That was all he saw, a beautiful woman who needed his protection, and to every other vision his youth determined to blind itself.

"I don't care what he's told me! I don't care what you've been. I only know I love you. You're the most glorious, fascinating woman in the world—and I want you, do you hear! I want you more than anything—more than anyone! I love you! Naomi—will you marry me—now—tonight?"

She closed her eyes. All she had planned—all she had longed for! Marshy's move had only succeeded in thrusting it more swiftly into her grasp. And yet she did not stop to think of that. All that registered were those three words: "I love you."

"We'll get away from here!" he plunged on. "I'll take you west—home. No Kents there to tell ugly stories. We'll forget them ourselves. Nobody need ever know. We'll be happy—and I'll have you all to myself. Those lips and eyes—they'll be mine, all mine. Naomi—dearest—let me kiss them now!"

Her arms had gone up instinctively, but they dropped again without touching him. She held away, without looking at him.

"No, Bill, it can't be."

"Naomi!"

"No. I couldn't make you happy, boy, I know it."

"Yes, you could. You're the only woman—"

"No—I couldn't. Why, you don't love me. You love the thing I represent—the thing that represents me—Broadway. Take me away from it and what would I be? A faded woman, Bill, a woman who would only make you hate her because she's so different from what you thought. And I'd rather never have you, than to see you in a short time—oh, it wouldn't take long!—disgusted with me."

"You don't love me—that's it!" he flamed.

"If I didn't love you, I'd marry you. Sounds queer that, doesn't it?"

"Then we both care! What else matters?"

"Only that I want to give you happiness—and I can't."

"You're the only woman who can."

"No, I'm not, dear. You think so now. But it's the grease-paint stuff you love! Out on the ranch—with my hair its own color, you'd wonder why you did it."

He paid no attention to her last whispered words.

"I'm willing to risk it! I'll risk anything for you."

"You'd find me out, Bill—you'd be bound to. Why, I never go out in the sun without wearing a veil to keep the secret of my complexion to myself. And there, where you belong, I'd be in the sun all day." She tried to smile. "How would I look going round a ranch like the queen of

a harem? No, you'd have to see me as I am—and in a week, you'd hate me."

He went close, hearing only the sob in her voice.

"Dearest—you think I'm young—that I don't know my own mind. You think I don't know my woman when I meet her!"

She smiled now, with a little shake of the head.

"You don't, you only think you do. You love the way people look at me in a restaurant. You love the way I wear my clothes. You love my coloring. It's put on, boy, and so is the sheen of my hair you rave about and the blackness of my lashes. It's all fake—like me."

"Why are you telling me all this?"

"Because—because you mean more to me than anything in the world. Because I'd rather have your happiness than my own."

Even as the words came, they amazed her. All afternoon they had been struggling deep down in her consciousness. A girl with stark young eyes had opened wide those half-closed ones.

"Then that's the only thing that counts," he retaliated, eyes alight, and his arms went out. "If you love me, I don't care about anything else."

She pulled back. Once his lips touched hers, she knew she could not go through with what she had to do. Recklessly—while the mood held her—as if she were another person playing a trick on Naomi Stokes, she moved round the room, turning off the soft lamplight. A second later, the central chandelier flashed its glare and Naomi was at his side again.

"Wait, Bill—I want to show you something."

She disappeared into the bedroom. When she came back, there was a white rag clenched in her hands.

"I'm not really beautiful the way you see me," and even as she spoke the words, her eyes were frightened. "I'm a faker—but for once I'm going to be honest with you—with myself. I'm going to let you see the woman you don't know, the woman you'd see—out there."

Without pausing to give herself breath, she dragged the cloth, weighted with some thick lotion, across her face. It came away covered with color. She threw it aside. The face it left lifted to his was like tragedy, unmasked.

"Look—I can scrape it off—the beauty you love so. This is the way I'll be in broad daylight, Bill. These lines—they're the years I've stolen from you. They're the real me—the me you don't know. Do you want me now?"

He looked down on the face that in ten seconds had aged ten years. Dazedly he took in the circles under the eyes, the pinched lines from nostrils to mouth, the pallor of the lips. The luminous cream of her skin had given way to a whiteness that looked dead. All the exotic color of her—the color that fascinated him—was gone. It was almost as if some magic had wafted away the Naomi he knew, as if this were another woman.

He stood there, gazing down on her, confused, silent before the revelation he could not quite compass. Only the eyes of his Naomi remained, infinitely sad, infinitely lovely, even with the heavy black gone from their straight lashes.

"You don't want me now, boy. You don't want the woman I really am. Don't

stop to think! Just answer me," she whispered.

But he did stop to think. Without quite meeting the eyes raised to his, holding his own away from the face that seemed suddenly a strange one, he lifted her two trembling hands, put them against his lips.

"I've asked you to marry me, Naomi," he said huskily. "I'm asking you again."

"Thank you for that, boy dear. You—you're just everything I thought you were. But I'm not going to take you up. Not now! If you want me six months from now, come back for me. I'll know then—that you need me. Only, dear—you won't come."

He looked straight at her then, letting himself see only the eyes that had not changed. And she knew before he spoke that he was bowing, without argument, to her verdict.

"I'll come back for you," he told her. "I won't wait six months. You'll see!"

She simply shook her head and no smile of hope touched her pale lips.

A few minutes later she stood looking for a long time at the door that had closed after him. Then she put on hat and coat and went down the steps and over to the theater.

CHAPTER VI

Harvard Club,
New York, July 30th.

Dear Naomi:

This letter is going to be harder to write than an income tax report. When a man has never before been on his knees, to a woman, they're apt to be creaky and resist bending. But I'm on my knees to you, my dear, in tribute, in abject apology, in the tenderest feeling I've ever known in my life.

Last March Bill Dixon went home and I sat back with the sensation of a good Samaritan. I was blithering ass enough to think I was the one who had sent him away. Today, four months later, I've learned the truth. It came with the announcement of his marriage to Nan Crawford. He told me what happened. He told me what you had done, Naomi.

I've never had much belief in women. I've always thought them rather a poor lot. That's the penalty of having begun early to know the wrong side of them—assuming there was no other. But you've given an old stager a faith he's never known. For that I can't repay you. But whatever I have, whatever I can give you of devotion and friendship is yours, dear girl. Knowing what you were equal to doing for that boy has suddenly made life worth living for me.

I haven't seen you in months. Will you make up for time lost? Shall we go to supper together tomorrow night?

Yours—I mean it—
MARSHY.

Naomi's eyes wandered from the letter to another that lay open on the desk beside it. It was in a boy's rugged hand, incoherent, embarrassed. It told of his approaching marriage and tried to thank her for making him see that the old love was the true one. She had read it so many times that she could have told what it told her—with eyes shut.

She reread Kent's letter then. After a moment she picked up her pen and wrote:

Thank you, dear Marshy. I can use your friendship. I need it. But I've quit going out to suppers—for good.

NAOMI.

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